THE Nation.

POSTCARDS FROM OHIO

IN THE SHADOW OF NAFTA, DEMOCRATS WOO THE WORKING CLASS

JoANN WYPIJEWSKI

A LETTER FROM FEMINISTS ON THE ELECTION

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH RALPH NADER?

Katha Pollitt

OBAMA'S MERCENARY POSITION

Jeremy Scahill

MARCH 17, 2008
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Letters

MARINES IN CRISIS: UNTREATED PTSD KATHY DOBIE
THE Nation.
THE CHOICE
WHY OBAMA'S THE BEST CANDIDATE TO BUILD A PROGRESSIVE MAJORITY
CHRISTOPHER HAYES

Abandoned by the Corps

Shirley, Mass.
I have been in prison for nearly thirty-five years. I am writing in response to Kathy Dobie's wonderful article "Denial in the Corps" [Feb.18]. I am a decorated veteran of the Marine Corps who served in Vietnam in 1965 and '66, forced to retire by wounds received in action.

When I first came to prison, in 1973, there were several other Vietnam veterans with "problems." At the time PTSD was not part of the American lexicon, but we all knew where our problems stemmed from, and it did not require a name. No one kills another human being without killing a large part of themselves… and it does not go away.

I am told that one out of six veterans ended up in prison within their first year after returning from the war, and none received any sort of treatment other than talks with one another in support of what we were feeling. The PTSD level today is going to be far worse because of the type of warfare and the multiple deployments. When they come to prison—and they will—there is no treatment for them still.
Joe Labriola
www.freejoelab.com

Freeland, Wash.
It is not unusual for me to sit down and read your publication cover to cover in one sitting. But the story about Lance Cpl. James Jenkins, and his photo, made my eyes sting with memories, things I've seen. It hit me where it should hit everyone—where we really live, in our hearts. Staring out the window at the trailing woodsmoke from my warm stove, I watch as it is lifted by a gentle wind. Somewhere in that wind is Corporal Jenkins, his breath along with so many others, the same we all breathe. I was once a corpsman. I, too, have been drunk and crazy in Oceanside. Bad drunk and mad crazy. This story about Jenkins, James or Jimmy, I know how it ends. I know the CO's words and the sickening sound of his "manly man" voice, too. Nothing's changed after thirty-seven years. Even so, I read on. Even so, it takes me two days to get through "Denial in the Corps." *The Nation* shows the truth where other journalists fear consequences of a complicit corporatocracy. *The Nation* and only a handful of others seem to give a damn about Jenkins. Real people, real blood, real life and the horrifying reality of how little our elected officials know about real death.
Bobby Crosby

Hillary or Barack?

Christopher Hayes's February 18 "The Choice," making the case that Barack Obama is the candidate most likely to bring about a new progressive majority, drew much mail, evenly divided between readers who agree with Hayes and those who do not. Below is a sample. —*The Editors*

Racine, Wis.
Christopher Hayes has fingered exactly my own dilemma: vote for a "closet neocon" Hillary or a centrist-leaning Obama? The answer: Obama by default. But I bristle at the use of the term "progressive" to describe either.
Theron P. Snell

Mercer Island, Wash.
I grew up in South Africa during the worst years of apartheid. My mood has been dark as the prospect of the end of the American experiment has loomed large. It all felt so familiar. I have been depressed. But Obama has changed my mood. He has given me hope. I see the excitement for Obama in my children—two first-time voters in the next election. I am excited by the massive crowds at his stump stops and the massive turnout of young voters at the primaries. My vote, the votes of my teenage boys and my wife, an ultra-feminist, is with Obama. He inspires us, encourages us, gives us hope.
Neil Chasan

Brookline, Mass.
I am surprised Hayes went with the decaf latte crowd supporting Obama.

letters@thenation.com

(continued on page 22)

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The Real McCain Scandal

There are few political commodities more lucrative than a reputation for integrity, which may explain why any lobbyist worth his salt would do well to court John McCain. The Arizona senator is considered so beyond the taint of corruption, he is free to engage all the more brazenly in the truck and barter of money and influence that ensures the functioning of the corporate welfare state.

EDITORIAL

The presumptive Republican presidential nominee made a name for himself as a senator as one of the notorious Keating Five, legislators busy intervening in regulatory matters on behalf of crooked S&L baron Charles Keating. As McCain sells it (and the media tell it), this was the turning point in his career, a brush with ignominy that set him on his path as a maverick reformer.

But the narrative of McCain as redeemed sinner is sharply at odds with his record, a sliver of which came to light when the *New York Times* published, after months of dithering, a front-page story on his relationship with a lobbyist whose clients had business before his Senate committee. Leaving aside the unconfirmed sex insinuations surrounding McCain and lobbyist Vicki Iseman, the established facts are tawdry enough: McCain intervened with a regulatory body on behalf of a cable company his committee was regulating, after receiving thousands in donations from its CEO, meeting with the CEO and spending lots of time with a lobbyist working for the firm. In the ginned-up outrage that followed the *Times* story, McCain denied ever having spoken to CEO Lowell Bud Paxson about the pending case before the FCC, a falsehood contradicted by Paxson and by McCain himself in a 2002 deposition. And it wasn't just Paxson. In 2001 McCain went to bat for the entire cruise industry when it was a lucrative client of Iseman's firm, Alcalde and Fay.

All par for the course. Despite his branding as a crusading reformer, McCain was and continues to be a business-as-usual conservative. Indeed, he doesn't just cozy up to lobbyists on planes or take their money—half a million in this campaign cycle alone. They are running his campaign. As the *Washington Post* reported the day after the *Times* story broke, McCain's inner circle is dominated by lobbyists, one of whom, Charles Black, recently copped to handling his lobbying business by phone from the back of the Straight Talk Express!

And while the monied interests do their work from the back of his campaign bus, the straight talker is busy running as far as possible from the signature legislative achievement that bears his name: the McCain-Feingold campaign finance reform bill. This started in 2001, when McCain, while pushing to end the massive unregulated donations known as soft money, set up a nonprofit called the Reform Institute, which existed chiefly to—you guessed it—soak up large, unregulated donations from corporate interests, including $200,000 from Cablevision. (Not surprisingly, McCain devoted great energy to its pet cause before the Commerce Committee.) And now McCain, who secured a bank loan on the collateral of his future federal campaign funds, is attempting to back out of his commitment to use public financing, contradicting the spirit of the program.

This, then, is John McCain: not a maverick but what Reformation-era Christians called an antinomian, one who believes that for those who are holy, all is permitted. McCain seems to think he is released from the obligations that bind lesser politicians.

The press, which has shown its willingness to go along with this ludicrous posture, has a basic obligation to call it what it is: the stale corruption of a status quo that must change.

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CITIZEN KANG

Episode 7 of Gary Phillips's serialized political mystery

NATION POLL

What's the defining difference between Clinton and Obama?

Rough Trade Debate

The day after General Motors confirmed the crisis in American manufacturing by offering early retirement packages to nearly all its remaining US workers, Barack Obama toured one of the Midwest's largest GM plants. The senator from Illinois stood before the assembled United Auto Workers in Janesville, Wisconsin, and presented himself as something radically new: a likely Democratic presidential nominee who understands the role that flawed trade policies have played in the rapid loss of industrial jobs and who wants to make things right.

COMMENT

Unlike Bill Clinton, Al Gore and John Kerry, who in the past four presidential elections carried the banner of the party that is supposed to be on the side of American workers, Obama declared in Janesville that pacts like NAFTA and the permanent normalization of trade relations with China had failed.

"We are not standing on the brink of recession due to forces beyond our control.... It was a failure of leadership and imagination in Washington—the culmination of decades of decisions that were made or put off without regard to the realities of a global economy and the growing inequality it's produced," Obama explained. His speech reframed his approach to economic issues—which had tended to disappoint fair-trade activists, especially after he endorsed, along with Hillary Clinton, the recent Peru Free Trade Agreement. "It's a Washington where decades of trade deals like NAFTA and China have been signed with plenty of protections for corporations and their profits but none for our environment or our workers, who've seen factories shut their doors and millions of jobs disappear."

Obama certainly sounded like he was proposing a break from Clinton-Bush continuity on trade policy. But his rhetoric left much to be desired. Ohio Representative Marcy Kaptur, a Toledo Democrat who has not endorsed a candidate because of her frustration with Obama and Clinton on trade, bluntly informed the Illinois senator that his remarks were not sufficient. "Barack Obama says he's going to retrain workers. For what? There's not a job like the ones that are being lost to be had," says Kaptur, whose city has seen tens of thousands of industrial jobs disappear in the era of free trade. "We've had candidates promising retraining for decades. What we want is a candidate who says, 'My trade policies will help workers who have jobs keep them and create new jobs for workers who need them.'"

Kaptur says this is a subtlety that blue-collar workers in Ohio, Pennsylvania and other hard-hit states understand, even if Democratic strategists in Washington don't. When Gore and Kerry talked in 2000 and 2004 about offering workers who had lost jobs because of trade deals a chance to "retrain," they came across as either not understanding the debate or not caring about it. "This is about people's livelihoods. They take it seriously enough to listen to what's being said," explains Kaptur. "It's not enough to talk about how sorry you are about people losing jobs and think that gets you a vote. That's being descriptive, not prescriptive. That's telling us, 'I feel your pain.' We want to stop feeling the pain."

The Citizens Trade Campaign, a coalition of labor, environmental, family farm and consumer groups, joined Kaptur and other key Democratic members of Congress in communicat-

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Noted.

EYE ON THE NETROOTS: We are excited to announce a new department for the magazine: **Net Movement**, led by *Nation* contributor **Ari Melber**. Dedicated to assessing how people use the Internet to affect public policy and organize political and social change, Net Movement will take a special interest in progressive innovations that can empower the disenfranchised, create and connect communities, inform public discourse and strengthen meaningful democracy. Melber has written about politics, activism and public policy for a variety of publications and websites. He is a contributing editor of the **Personal Democracy Forum**, which analyzes technology's impact on democracy, and has been a featured speaker at **Blogging Liberally** and **YearlyKos**, the national netroots convention, where he served on the advisory committee of the first netroots debate for Democratic presidential candidates in 2007.

TAXI WINS: The "dark side" infamously referred to by Dick Cheney as a euphemism for torture has come into the light—the spotlight of the Oscars. **Taxi to the Dark Side**, directed and produced by **Alex Gibney**, was named Best Documentary of the year at the eightieth Academy Awards. Following the case of **Dilawar**—an Afghan taxi driver who was captured, tortured and murdered by American interrogators at Bagram in 2002—*Taxi* searingly documents the use of interrogation tactics like sleep deprivation and waterboarding. Dilawar's ordeal, sadly, was a harbinger of things to come, as such techniques migrated to Guantánamo and Abu Ghraib, with approval from the highest echelons of the White House.

But while palatable enough for Oscar accolades, *Taxi* has been deemed too controversial by the **Discovery Channel**, which had purchased rights to broadcast the film. Just before his Oscar win, Gibney was notified that *Taxi* "doesn't fit into Discovery's plans" and that the film's content might damage Discovery's public offering. Gibney responded by calling the move "tantamount to political censorship." Fortunately, **HBO** has been only too happy to pick up the slack. Look for *Taxi to the Dark Side* in theaters nationwide (distributed by THINKFilm) and on HBO in September. BRETT STORY

SPACE CHARADE: The Pentagon scored a direct hit February 20 when it convinced journalists that the launch of a missile from a Navy Aegis-class cruiser was not an antisatellite weapon test—something the United States roundly condemned China for carrying out in January 2007—but rather a heroic mission to save the inhabitants of earth from flaming death. Few questioned the claim that the satellite posed a danger. None noted that the chances of any satellite hitting a human is about one in a million or that the odds of this satellite coming close enough to injure a human with noxious fumes is about one in a thousand. Or that any human would have to be a moron to have a flaming gas tank land nearby and then hang around long enough to breathe in enough fumes to cause damage.

Administration spinners won this one. But it might prove a Pyrrhic victory, says **Theresa Hitchens**, director of the **Center for Defense Information**. "This highlights the major problem plaguing our space policy for the past eight years," says Hitchens, "a focus on the short-term gains rather than our long-term strategic interests." After China's test and now America's, Russian officers may push to answer in kind. India might get in the race, having just launched two satellites last year and formed its first Aerospace Command. Japan might not be far behind; it launched a satellite this month and proposed a law allowing the government to use space for military purposes for the first time.

With the most satellites in orbit and a heavy dependence on them for everything from military surveillance to phone communications to ATM withdrawals, the United States has the most to lose from a weapons-in-space race. And we have just declared it open season. JOSEPH CIRINCIONE

OUTFLANKING NADER: During the 2000 presidential campaign, I interviewed Democrat **Al Gore** several times about the candidacy of the Green Party's **Ralph Nader**. Gore always answered that his own environmental record was pretty good. He never got that most of Nader's appeal had to do with the public-interest campaigner's blunt criticism of US trade and foreign policies that had grown increasingly imperial under successive Republican and Democratic presidents. Similarly, when I interviewed **John Kerry** about Nader's independent challenge in 2004, the Democrat struggled to respond coherently—although memories of the 2000 race and intensity of the passion to end **George Bush**'s presidency made Nader less of a factor. Comes the 2008 election season and Nader is back, mounting another campaign against corporate greed, militaristic foreign policies and presidential crimes. Having engaged in some sort of presidential campaigning each year since 1992, Nader is becoming a new **Norman Thomas**, the perennial candidate and great crusader for peace and social justice who ran on the Socialist tickets from 1928 to 1948. And just as Thomas's most frequent Democratic foe, **Franklin Roosevelt**, understood how to respond to his challenger from the left—with respect, consultation and a smart borrowing of ideas that frustrated Thomas but strengthened Roosevelt—so it seems the Democrats might finally nominate a candidate who "gets" Nader.

Instead of grumbling about Nader running as a "spoiler," **Barack Obama** says, "I think the job of the Democratic Party is to be so compelling that a few percentage [points] of the vote going to another candidate is not going to make any difference." Obama recognizes that Democrats must campaign smarter and better on the trade and foreign policy issues that Nader addresses. Obama's begun to do that—he's far clearer in his criticism of free-trade deals and a big-elbows foreign policy than were either Gore or Kerry. The Illinois senator's agile campaign has borrowed a page from Nader's "Super Rally" strategy of 2000, as has his rhetoric about the need for a transformational politics. Obama's not going to be exactly like Nader on issues. But, like FDR, he recognizes that instead of grumbling about spoilage, a smart Democrat can and must embrace issues and ideals in a manner that narrows the space left for challengers from his left to maneuver. JOHN NICHOLS

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ing to both the Obama and Clinton campaigns that more was needed. The CTC's state-based affiliates have pressured the candidates to respond to detailed questionnaires on trade issues. "We know we only have a narrow window to get these candidates to make real commitments," says CTC director Andy Gussert. "But it happens that the window is open in the states where we've done years of education with the voters and where the candidates know they have to address our issues."

It also happens that the pressure has worked. Obama's made trade a central theme of his now legendary speeches, and Clinton's doing the same—albeit more clumsily because, as one aide to an Ohio Congressman explained in reference to her husband's administration, "When I hear NAFTA, I think Clinton." In Wisconsin both Obama and Clinton committed to opposing upcoming trade agreements with Colombia, Panama and South Korea and endorsed regulations on foreign investors. Obama seemed to go even further, vowing to replace the fast-track model for negotiating trade agreements—a shift that would strengthen the ability of Congress to demand protections for workers, farmers, consumers and the environment. That got the Illinois senator higher marks from many fair-trade activists, although some senior analysts with industrial unions such as the Machinists argued that Clinton—who has proposed appointing a "trade prosecutor" to enforce commitments made in agreements—has a better understanding of the intricacies of the debate. However, an actual fair trader, Wisconsin Senator Russ Feingold, remained unimpressed. "I am troubled that both of our candidates are not as strong on this issue as they should be. They're saying the right things now, because they have to. But this is not good enough," says Feingold, who came close to running for the nomination on a platform that promised trade policies written for Main Street rather than Wall Street. "Once this nomination is nailed down, I am very worried that whoever the candidate is will start trying to pacify the various elements of the business community and move to the middle, and that we're going to get nothing out of this issue."

The senator's fears are rooted in the bitter experience of watching Democratic nominees get the trade debate wrong—on both political and policy grounds. That's why the CTC and its allies say they are as interested in educating the candidates about the depth of public concern regarding trade as they are about hearing specific statements from them. It's also why Kaptur and other members of Congress who have long records of fighting both Democratic and Republican Presidents on trade have so far withheld endorsements—and superdelegate votes. "This is the one benefit of a long nominating process," says Kaptur. "We've finally gotten to states where the candidates have to talk about trade. We don't have to let them get away with things. We can finally say, 'If a Democrat wants to win in November, he or she has to get past the generalities and start taking trade agreements as seriously as do the voters in states like this one—states that have been devastated by bad trade policies.'" JOHN NICHOLS

Calvin Trillin, Deadline Poet

As Daffodils Come Out in Spring

So Nader's going to run again.
The *Times* put that on page fifteen.
There's nothing that's much sadder than
An ego trip that's barely seen.

Morning in America

A letter from feminists on the election

COMMENT

Two days after the Texas debate between Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama, a group of old friends broke out the good china for a light breakfast of strong coffee, blueberry muffins and fresh-squeezed orange juice. We were there to hash out a split that threatened our friendship and the various movements with which we are affiliated. In some ways it was a kaffeeklatch like a million others across America early on a Saturday morning—but for the fact that this particular group included Gloria Steinem, a co-founder of the National Women's Political Caucus; Beverly Guy-Sheftall, director of the Women's Research and Resource Center at Spelman College; Johnnetta Cole, chair of the board of the JBC Global Diversity and Inclusion Institute; British-born radio journalist Laura Flanders; Kimberlé Crenshaw, professor of law at Columbia and UCLA; Carol Jenkins, head of the Women's Media Center; Farah Griffin, professor of English and comparative literature at Columbia; Eleanor Smeal, president of the Feminist Majority; Kenyan anthropologist Achola Pala Okeyo; management consultant and policy strategist Janet Dewart Bell; and Patricia Williams, Columbia law professor and *Nation* columnist.

It was a casual gathering, but one that settled down to business quickly. We were all progressives but diverse nonetheless. We differed in our opinions of whether to vote for Hillary Clinton or Barack Obama—our goal was not an endorsement. Rather, the concern that united us all was the "race-gender split" playing out nationally, in which the one is relentlessly pitted against the other. We did not want to see a repeat of the ugly history of the nineteenth century, when the failure of the women's movement to bring about universal adult suffrage metastasized into racial resentment and rift that weakened feminism throughout much of the twentieth century.

How, we wondered, did a historic breakthrough moment for which we have all longed and worked hard, suddenly risk becoming marred by having to choose between "race cards" and "gender cards"? By petty competitiveness about who endures more slings and arrows? By media depictions of white women as the sole inheritors of the feminist movement and black men as the sole beneficiaries of the civil rights movement? By renderings of black women as having to split themselves right down the center with Solomon's sword in order to vote for either candidate? What happened, we wondered, to the last four decades of discussion about tokenism and multiple identities and the complex

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intersections of race, gender, sexuality, ethnicity and class?

We all worried that the feminist movement's real message is not being heard, and we thought about how to redirect attention to those coalitions that form the bedrock of feminist concern: that wide range of civil rights groups dedicated to fighting discrimination, domestic violence, the disruptions of war, international sex and labor trafficking, child poverty and a tattered economy that threatens to increase the number of homeless families significantly.

We thought of all that has happened in just seven short but disastrous years of the Bush Administration, and we asked: how might we position ourselves so we're not fighting one another? Our issues are greater than any disagreement about either candidate. We all know that there is simply too much at stake.

On the one hand, we celebrate the unprecedented moment in which a black person and a female person have risen to the lead in the Democratic race for President of the United States. On the other hand, both of them are constantly pressed to deny their race or gender, to "transcend" it, to prove by their very existence that misogyny and racism no longer exist. This, even as both are popularly and reductively caricatured in perniciously stereotypical ways. Clinton as a woman with balls, Obama as "unqualified" and "grandiose," Chelsea Clinton being "pimped" by her mother while Bill O'Reilly declares that Michelle Obama should be "lynched."

How do we resist such a toxic Punch and Judy show of embattled identity, to the degree that many women feel that a vote for Obama "cheats" Clinton of her chance to break the glass ceiling, and many blacks feel that a vote for Clinton is a betrayal of the chance to break the race barrier?

We agreed that everyone needs to refocus on the big picture. All of us know that another Republican presidency would effectively bury the gains of both the civil rights and the feminist movements of the past fifty years. Judicial nominations alone could upend decades of hard work.

How, therefore, to reclaim a common purpose, a truly democratic "we": we women of all races, we blacks of all genders, we Americans of all languages, we immigrants of all classes, we Latinas of all colors, we Southerners of all regions, we families of all ages, we parents working three jobs without healthcare, we poor who sleep on the streets, we single mothers whose homes are being repossessed, we displaced New Orleanians whose neo-Arcadian epic of displacement has yet to be resolved.

"Can't we all just get along?" could have been the mantra of this power breakfast—though certainly not forever, nor for all purposes. Just long enough to roust the Republican rascals: the oil barons and Enron fraudsters and pre-emptive warmongers and sadistic torture-masters and trigger-happy antiabortionists and Blackwater mercenaries and the tribal extremists of various religious stripes who seem to look forward to Armageddon finally segregating humanity into true believers and recalcitrant, disposable trash.

In the confusion of this triumphalist but precarious moment, therefore, it is important that the alliance between a now global feminism and a now global civil rights movement not be turned against itself and ultimately defeated. Obama and Clinton, each a complexly archetypal "role model," represent, at their best, a new kind of American possibility. If we could get over our fixation on a fantasy that many of us hoped to see realized in our lifetimes, maybe we could finally turn to the issues that each of them brings to the table. We cannot remain tangled by stereotypes that demean with their sweeping divisiveness and historical cliché.

As we gathered up the empty plates, we recommitted ourselves to further joint discussions about how to attain that collective better future, however many early mornings, late nights and urns of coffee into the future that may take. We hope women across America will choose to do the same.

Comix Nation

by WARD SUTTON

THE COMING UTOPIA OF POST-PARTISAN POLITICS
THE AMERICAN PEOPLE HAD HAD ENOUGH.
WHY IS THE GOVERNMENT ALWAYS FIGHTING ITSELF?
CAN'T THEY GET OVER IT ALREADY?
SENATE FLOOR SHOWDOWN
WHAT KIND OF DEMOCRACY IS THIS?!
PUBLIC OFFICIALS GOT THE MESSAGE.
THIS NATION WILL NO LONGER TOLERATE DIVISIVE BATTLES OVER UNPLEASANT, CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES.
I URGE MY COLLEAGUES ON BOTH SIDES OF THE AISLE TO JOIN ME IN GIVING IT A REST.
BACK-ROOM DEALS HELPED FORGE AN HISTORIC TRUCE.
I'M AS SICK AS YOU ARE OF REGURGITATING THE SAME OLD ARGUMENTS OVER GAY RIGHTS, ABORTION, IMMIGRATION ...
LET'S FOCUS ON WHAT WE HAVE IN COMMON FOR ONCE ...
AND FINALLY ... SUCCESS!
AT LONG LAST WE HAVE ENDED THE DISCORD BETWEEN OUR PARTIES AND JOINED TOGETHER FOR A SINGLE, UNIFYING FOCUS:
SERVING THE FINANCIAL INTERESTS OF ALL OUR CORPORATE BENEFACTORS!

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Alexander Cockburn

Less Whining, More Dirt!

Suddenly the air is filled with whining. The *New York Times* ombudsman whines that the *New York Times* wrongly set up John McCain as a man untrue to his wife (a charge that, to judge from her dour countenance at the press conference, may have been regarded as plausible by McCain's wife, Cindy). The Clinton campaign whines that the press is being partial to Obama. *The New Republic* takes 5,160 words on this theme from Sean Wilentz, who chews on the matter with such fury that one must surmise that the Clinton campaign had promised to make him Librarian of Congress, or some kindred dignity. Less whiningly, since it's winning, the Obama campaign spluttered about the Clinton campaign circulating a photo of him in a turban and what looks to me like a nurse's white uniform, though apparently it's Somali ceremonial rig.

And the Republicans? They don't whine. They scream. They scream so loudly the *Times* backs into its own story. They plant stories and the press tugs its forelock. Take the Associated Press. On February 24 the news agency runs a story by Nedra Pickler under the headline Conservatives Say Obama Lacks Patriotism. Pickler's fourth sentence cites, as her story's lead source, Roger Stone, chastely described as a "Republican consultant."

This is the same Roger Stone who appeared with Tucker Carlson on MSNBC a few days earlier to promote an anti-Clinton 527 group, Citizens United Not Timid, or CUNT. "The more people go to the site," Stone had smirked to *The Weekly Standard* in January, "the more people buy the T-shirts.... The more people wear the T-shirts, the more people are educated. Consequently, our mission has been achieved." Shouldn't Pickler have thought that Stone—maybe best remembered for his swinger ad with his wife, which lost him his job with the Dole campaign in 1996—was a mite too tacky as a lead source, to be dispensing objective political analysis?

And if she really wanted him as her lead source, shouldn't Pickler have told her AP customers that Stone is a dirty trickster with a pedigree going back to the very dawn of time, which began, at least in Stone's calendar, not with the acronym of his present 527 but with Nixon's CREEP?

The press has slobbered over McCain the phony "maverick" for years. As the Phoenix-based reporter Amy Silverman once put it, "As long as he's the noble outsider, McCain can get away with anything it seems—the Keating Five, a drug stealing wife, nasty jokes about Chelsea Clinton—and the pundits will gurgle and coo."

Even when his hand was actually caught in the cookie jar with the recent exposé of his association with Ms. Iseman, lobbyist for Paxson Communications, the outcome was somehow not conclusive demolition of his claims to be a foe of lobbyists and their baneful reach in Washington but that he has been vindicated, and the *Times* shamed.

In fact, as it has progressed, with the *Washington Post* and *Newsweek* playing catch-up on the *Times*, the Iseman scandal discloses him as a liar in his denials that he met with Lowell "Bud" Paxson, the media executive for whom Iseman was working.

Paxson now rewards McCain by flatly contradicting to the *Washington Post* statements from McCain's presidential campaign that the senator did not meet with Paxson or his lobbyist before sending two letters to the Federal Communications Commission on Paxson's behalf. McCain claims that the letters merely urged the FCC to hurry up and issue a decision. So, you're the chairman of the FCC and you get a kick in the ass from the head of the powerful Senate committee that runs your budget, and you don't figure out how you're meant to click your heels? The FCC did click its heels.

The Obama campaign can look forward to a long summer of racist stories already being peddled by the right, about the candidate's mother, the commie slut and lover of non-Caucasians; the candidate's wife, already being portrayed as several hundred miles to the left of Malcolm X. True to the model of Willie Horton, first used against Michael Dukakis by Al Gore in the New York primary in 1988, then rehabbed with deadly effect by Bush Sr. against Dukakis in the fall, the Republicans have delightedly seized the turban photo given Drudge by someone in the Clinton campaign, Maggie Williams's fingerprints carefully dusted off the e-mail and the JPEG.

Let's hope we have less whining from the Democrats and more retaliatory dirt. Obama's family? What about McCain's first wife, Carol, a plucky woman who kept the home fires burning all those years, raising the kids alone while John was in the Hanoi Hilton? She was very seriously injured in an auto accident, then dumped in 1980 by the war hero, shortly after he had started an affair with the 25-year-old Arizona beer heiress and then used her money to start his political career. McCain's defenders say he had separated from Carol by the time he took up with Cindy. A detailed story by Nicholas Kristof in the *New York Times* in 2000 demolished this. A senior Republican lobbyist told me only the other day that there are people on the Hill who still won't forgive McCain for his treatment of Carol.

Obama's opponents, starting with Hillary's former campaign co-chair in New Hampshire, make an issue of his experiences with drugs when he was a teenager—described in his book. We can expect plenty more on that from Republicans. What about Cindy feeding her drug habit by stealing from the pharmacy of a charity she was running? We want this woman as First Lady? And why was she on painkillers? There are plenty of stories about McCain's ungovernable rages. How about some Swift-boating of the "war hero"? How much of a war hero is he? Just how steadfast was he as a prisoner of war? Did he really defy the "gooks," as he insists on calling his captors to this day?

Obama can take the rhetorical high road, but he should have some mean stokers in the boiler room. ■

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Katha Pollitt

Ralph Rides Again

Ralph Nader looked vigorous, sharp and confident when he appeared on *Meet the Press* to announce that he was running for President. I hope I'm that full of beans when I'm 74, not that that will be anytime soon, but *sheesh! man*, I wanted to shout at the screen, where's your dignity? Do you really want to go down in history as the world's most irritating vanity candidate? It's getting hard to write those pieces that heap praise on Nader for all his great service to humanity—safer cars, safer water, safer factories—and beg him to please, please stick with his day job. Every time he runs, those glory days are four years longer ago. Those students from Prairie View A&M in Texas, who walked seven miles to their Republican-gerrymandered polling place in order to early-vote for Barack Obama, weren't even born when Nader was in his prime.

Ralph Nader has a perfect right to run for President. And anyway it's hard to imagine that he will have the same effect in 2008 he had in 2000—which, he told Tim Russert, was very little, because the Republicans stole the election, which Gore rightfully won. Be that as it may, we've all had a seven-year crash course in just how much difference there can be between Tweedledee and Tweedledum. In 2000, Nader got 2.7 percent of the vote. In 2004, he got 0.36 percent—that's fewer than four voters in 1,000. If Hillary gets the nomination, Ralph might pick up the hard-left sexist vote, always a valuable demographic, but if it's Obama versus McCain? Not enough difference between the candidate who opposed the war from the start and the one who wants to stay for 100 years? Between the one who wants to insure everyone (well, almost everyone) and the one who doesn't see much of a problem with healthcare as is? The prochoice one and the one who voted 113 out of 117 times against reproductive rights? Oh, I forgot, Naderites never denied that the parties differed on abortion. They just didn't care, and they probably still don't. These people wouldn't vote Democratic if Nader wasn't running; they'd choose another protest candidate or stay home.

Here's what I don't like about Ralph running: his run is all about Ralph and his right to run. In the eight years since 2000, he's built no movement and mobilized no support. As I write, the Green Party nomination is up in the air—Nader and former Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney are the top contestants. But the Green Party today is embroiled in factional feuds and backbiting: it's hard to imagine it could provide Nader with even as much backup as it did in 2000. What is the point of popping up every four years to tweak the noses of the Dems? Beyond scoring him a few extra invitations from the Sunday talk-shows, it's hard to see how Ralph's Lone Ranger candidacy is going to reach the citizenry. Compared with John Edwards (whom Nader liked enough to support in the primaries), Nader is invisible. If he had wanted to reach a mass audience he could have run in the primaries like Dennis Kucinich—or, for that matter, Ron Paul—and gotten a ton of free airtime and a chance to show directly his superiority over the other candidates. That he passed up that opportunity but will howl if excluded from debates between the eventual nominees makes him seem vain and petulant.

The left loves to talk about the need for mass movements, yet in the electoral arena it offers mostly tiny, hapless third parties and futile symbolic runs by political celebrities who have no real interest in governing—campaigns that ignore the basic laws of electoral math because who needs to kiss a baby when we are just so right on the issues? When I dared suggest that Cindy Sheehan didn't have much chance of beating Nancy Pelosi—because whatever Pelosi may be in the comment section of AlterNet, in the real world she's a powerful and popular politician—I got clobbered by the true believers. It was as if I was the only child in the theater who refused to clap for Tinkerbell. But here we are months later, and where is Sheehan? Well, last week she and Tiffany Burns, her campaign manager, were in Cairo, to support members of the Muslim Brotherhood facing trial by military tribunal. Yes, yes, I know—even misogynous fundamentalists who want to turn Egypt into a theocracy deserve civil rights, although I'm not sure I'd go halfway around the world to make that point. But you have to admit, Cairo is an odd place to pursue votes in California's 8th District.

For decades it's been an irony of US politics that the grassroots movement has been on the right: conservative evangelicals and movement conservatives have been using the tactics developed by the left in the 1960s, branching out through neighborhoods and churches and schools while also steadily taking over the Republican Party precinct by precinct. They may fuss and fume, but they know nobody's perfect: if John McCain is the candidate, James Dobson is not going to mount an independent run so that creationists get a real choice in November. Now, finally, the Republican coalition may be reaching its natural limits, even as Obama has sparked something like a grassroots movement on the left. He's not as far to the left as Nader by a long shot, but if the majority of Democrats had wanted Ralph's politics they could have voted for John Edwards, and they didn't. Maybe someday we can have a real conversation about why the candidate who embodied the white-working-class-man-friendly economic populism that this magazine has promoted for years fell flat, and the woman and the biracial, multicultural man have inspired huge crowds of supporters. It wasn't supposed to happen this way. As Bill Fletcher wrote in *The Black Commentator*, "Edwards, much like Kucinich (in both the 2004 and 2008 Kucinich campaigns), fell prey to the historic 'white populist error'…that unity will magically appear by building a campaign that attacks poverty and corporate abuse, supports unions and focuses on the challenges facing the working class, BUT IGNORES RACE AND GENDER." Is identity politics, long blamed for the Democratic Party's low fortunes, now riding to its rescue? For Nader, who famously scorned "gonadal politics," that would be ironic indeed. ■

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Naomi Klein

Obama, Being Called a Muslim Is Not a Smear

Hillary Clinton denied leaking the photo of Barack Obama wearing a turban, but her campaign manager says that even if she had, it would be no big deal. "Hillary Clinton has worn the traditional clothing of countries she has visited and had those photos published widely."

Sure she did. And George W. Bush put on a fetching Chamato poncho in Santiago, while Paul Wolfowitz burned up YouTube with his antimalarial African dance routines when he was World Bank prez. The obvious difference is this: when white politicians go ethnic, they just look funny. When a black presidential contender does it, he looks foreign. And when the ethnic apparel in question is vaguely reminiscent of the clothing worn by Iraqi and Afghan fighters (at least to many Fox viewers, who think any headdress other than a baseball cap is a declaration of war on America), the image is downright frightening.

The turban "scandal" is all part of what is being referred to as "the Muslim smear." It includes everything from exaggerated enunciations of Obama's middle name to the online whisper campaign that Obama attended a fundamentalist madrassa in Indonesia (a lie), was sworn in on a Koran (another lie) and if elected would attach RadioShack speakers to the White House to broadcast the Muslim call to prayer (I made that one up).

So far, Obama's campaign has responded with aggressive corrections that tout his Christian faith, attack the attackers and channel a cooperative witness before the House Un-American Activities Committee. "Barack has never been a Muslim or practiced any other faith besides Christianity," states one fact sheet. "I'm not and never have been of the Muslim faith," Obama told a Christian News reporter.

Of course Obama must correct the record, but he doesn't have to stop there. What is disturbing about the campaign's response is that it leaves unchallenged the disgraceful and racist premise behind the entire "Muslim smear": that being Muslim is de facto a source of shame. Obama's supporters often say they are being "Swiftboated," casually accepting the idea that being accused of Muslimhood is tantamount to being accused of treason.

Substitute another faith or ethnicity, and you'd expect a very different response. Consider a report from the archives of this magazine. Thirteen years ago, Daniel Singer, *The Nation*'s late, much-missed Europe correspondent, went to Poland to cover a hotly contested presidential election. He reported that the race had descended into an ugly debate over whether one of the candidates, Aleksander Kwasniewski, was a closet Jew. The press claimed his mother had been buried in a Jewish cemetery (she was still alive), and a popular TV show aired a skit featuring the Christian candidate dressed as a Hasidic Jew. "What perturbed me," Singer wryly observed, "was that Kwasniewski's lawyers threatened to sue for slander rather than press for an indictment under the law condemning racist propaganda."

We should expect no less of the Obama campaign. When asked during the Ohio debate about Louis Farrakhan's support for his candidacy, Obama did not hesitate to call Farrakhan's anti-Semitic comments "unacceptable and reprehensible." When the turban photo flap came up in the same debate, he used the occasion to say nothing at all.

Farrakhan's infamous comments about Jews took place twenty-four years ago. The orgy of hate that is "the Muslim smear" is unfolding in real time, and it promises to greatly intensify in a general election. These attacks do not simply "smear Barack's Christian faith," as John Kerry claimed in a campaign mailing. They are an attack on all Muslims, some of whom actually do exercise their rights to cover their heads and send their kids to religious school. Thousands even have the very common name Hussein. All are watching their culture used as a crude bludgeon against Obama, while the candidate who is the symbol of racial harmony fails to defend them. This at a time when US Muslims are bearing the brunt of the Bush Administration's assaults on civil liberties, including dragnet wiretapping, and are facing a documented spike in hate crimes.

Occasionally, though not nearly enough, Obama says that Muslims are "deserving of respect and dignity." What he has never done is what Singer called for in Poland: denounce the attacks themselves as racist propaganda, in this case against Muslims.

The core of Obama's candidacy is that he alone—who lived in Indonesia as a boy and has an African grandmother—can "repair the world" after the Bush wrecking ball. That repair job begins with the 1.4 billion Muslims around the world, many of whom are convinced that the United States has been waging a war against their faith. This perception is based on facts, among them the fact that Muslim civilians are not counted among the dead in Iraq and Afghanistan; that Islam has been desecrated in US-run prisons; that voting for an Islamic party resulted in collective punishment in Gaza. It is also fueled by the rise of a virulent strain of Islamophobia in Europe and North America.

As the most visible target of this rising racism, Obama has the power to be more than its victim. He can use the attacks to begin the very process of global repair that is the most seductive promise of his campaign. The next time he's asked about his alleged Muslimness, Obama can respond not just by clarifying the facts but by turning the tables. He can state clearly that while a liaison with a pharmaceutical lobbyist may be worthy of scandalized exposure, being a Muslim is not. Changing the terms of the debate this way is not only morally just but tactically smart—it's the one response that could defuse these hateful attacks. The best part is this: unlike ending the Iraq War and closing Guantánamo, standing up to Islamophobia doesn't need to wait until after the election. Obama can use his campaign to start now. Let the repairing begin. ■

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Postcards From Ohio

LISA KLAUSNER

The white working-class vote is on the line—and so is the myth of Clinton-era good times.

by JoANN WYPIJEWSKI

Canton

Three weeks before the primary there was hardly a yard sign to be seen for any of the presidential candidates. On the rise of frozen grass in front of Steel Workers Local 1123 bold red, white and blue letters urge Elect Hiles, State Representative. The Local's president, Randy Feemster, wore a T-shirt sporting the same message for Richard Hiles, who worked at the Timken steel plant here for thirty-eight years. "There are Democrats, and there are labor Democrats, you know what I mean?" Feemster said. He is a big man with a thick, powerful build. But "to tell you the truth," he said when we first met, "I feel like a little bird that was flying, flying and then hit the glass, and now I'm just lying there by the window, stunned." The Steel Workers had backed John Edwards, and when he dropped out, Feemster says, "we had our heart broken."

Across town at Communications Workers Local 4302, four out of five workers I spoke with were similarly dashed and undecided. Edwards had shown up on picket lines and at union rallies, embracing issues that, they said, involved them mentally, emotionally, financially. No other candidate has yet picked up that baton with the same conviction, and the CWA International has not endorsed a candidate because its membership is split. One of the workers I met, Blanche McKinney, 59, is backing Hillary Clinton, as is the Local's vice president, Bob Wise. Experience. Problem-solving. Day one. The reasons McKinney gave for her choice are bullet points of the Clinton campaign. And then there's Bill. "I feel Bill gave me eight good years," she said.

The standard narrative of 1990s prosperity, and thus Bill Clinton's most important remaining legacy, is on the line in Ohio's primary. That, as much as Hillary's flagging electoral fortunes, is why Ohio is a must-win for the Clintons. In the same way that South Carolina shattered the myth of Bill as America's first black President, Ohio could shatter the myth of generalized Clinton-era good times.

Other states' primaries might have done the same; Virginia and Wisconsin broke Hillary's presumed lock on the white working-class vote. But for myriad reasons, earlier primaries did not searingly confront the campaigns with the issue of working-class decline. Decline is everywhere apparent in Ohio, where as a direct result of the North American Free Trade Agreement, 45,734 jobs were lost between 1995 and 2003. That only skims the surface of loss, because for every shutdown factory there are concentric bands of devastation, from direct support industries to the small businesses that depended on the custom of hourly workers to the schools that can't win new levies because people are taxed out. NAFTA sliced the skin, and the bleeding continues. After LTV Steel closed in Cleveland in 2001, according to Don Singer, a former official who worked with the state labor department, 3,100 businesses went down with it. Between November 1999 and November 2003, according to Policy Matters Ohio, the state had a net loss of 244,000 nonagricultural jobs. Today Ohio is the seventh-worst state in the country for finding a job.

Local 1123 is down to 2,400 members, while also servicing 6,000 retirees, and neither Obama nor Clinton has an answer for Feemster and other union leaders who again and again concede on wages to maintain company-paid health benefits and retiree pensions. Even before Edwards dropped out, the Democratic Leadership Council was congratulating itself that none of the top contenders favored a single-payer health insurance system, which Feemster supports. Nevertheless, he was waiting to be wooed by one of the candidates.

It is remarkable that, when we met in mid-February, he hadn't been. Stark County is an important swing county, and Feemster has long been key to mobilizing labor support in elections. Elsewhere I met other experienced election organizers whose only contact with the campaigns has come through

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Mike Farrell is a longstanding* Nation *reader.

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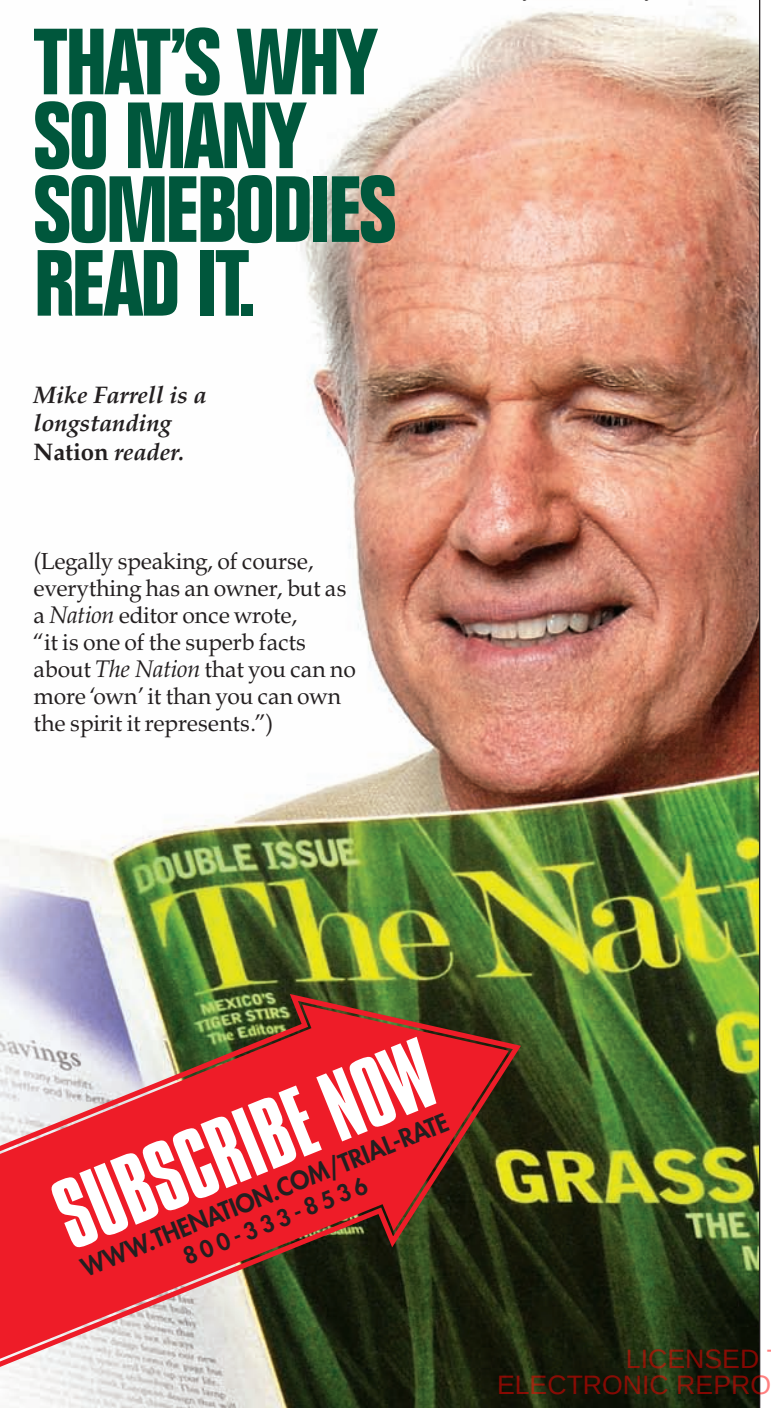

robocalls. My requests to both campaigns for their county coordinators' contact information went unanswered. It is as if no one had thought that Ohio would matter, that industrial unions would matter; as if these workers who say they often feel forgotten actually have been, even for the cynical aim of vote-rustling. In such circumstances, it is hard to know what might tip a vote. In Feemster's case it was a talk with Bill Clinton versus a meeting with Obama surrogates. The one, he said, gave specific answers to specific questions, even if Feemster didn't always agree; the others, no way as close to their candidate, danced around the issues. "Will Obama do away with NAFTA?" They waffled about legalisms; Bill said Hillary will fix it, and expounded beyond what Feemster had already heard about both candidates from the TV news shows that have become the background music in his house. Local 1123 cannot endorse a candidate, but with two weeks to go it rented part of its hall to the Clinton camp: "They were the first to ask." With less than a week to go, no one had yet shown up to work.

Lordstown

No question, Election '08 enlists white men in identity politics for the first time. What will lead them, their skin or their dick? A vote for Hillary might cover both propositions. Amid the arcing conveyors of splashy Chevy Cobalts and Pontiac G5s at the GM Lordstown plant, some of Hillary's white male supporters ticked off her plans, her ability to "hit the ground running." But sooner or later, usually sooner, it was Bill they admitted they'd be voting for. Bill will guide her. No one is as experienced as Bill. Because of their past failures, "the Clintons" are better positioned to get it right next time. NAFTA was a good idea that was badly implemented. In 2006, when Sherrod Brown swept away the Republican incumbent in the Senate race by hammering on trade deals, no Democrat called NAFTA a good idea. But the rationalization now is not as bizarre as it first seems. Organized labor rallied for Bill Clinton and the Democrats after he strong-armed Congress to pass the trade agreement, arguing in 1994 and again in '96 that he and the party could best control the downside. And the stock market bubble meant that, for a while at least, the economy expanded and some people had more money in their pockets.

Hillary reminded 200-plus assembled workers at the plant of those good days. They handed her a pair of boxing gloves, and she promised to fight the bankers, the corporations, the credit card companies, Wall Street, China. Afterward, as "She's an American girl…" blasted from the speakers, some workers said she had made the emotional connection they sought: "She actually seems like she's got feeling. Maybe it's because she's a woman. Women don't lie," said a white millwright named Mike. He has worked at GM for thirty years, and for thirteen of those, beginning in the '90s, he worked "seven twelves," twelve hours a day, seven days a week. "You don't make money unless you want to live here," a white man named John said. "You're kind of a slave." GM now wants to outsource most of Mike's work. Last year the United Auto Workers agreed to let the company hire new employees at about $13 an hour, half the rate of veteran workers, and rolled the dice by taking control over retiree

JoAnn Wypijewski is a writer based in New York City.

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health and pension benefits. In her speech, Hillary had said, "Some may call this the Rust Belt. That's not what I see. I see those shiny new cars. They look like the future to me." As Mike was explaining why he voted no on the GM contract, a company flak ordered him back to work and me off the premises.

Columbus

Michelle Obama gives the talk her husband can't. "Things have gotten worse—through Republican *and* Democratic Administrations," she says flatly. She didn't quite count the ways at Ohio State as she had when I saw her at a black church in South Carolina, but she deftly linked the shifting expectations for her husband's campaign with the constantly "moving bar" that has made people anxious wrecks. She projects herself as a class sister in telling of her "little unmiraculous life"—the daughter of a disabled shift worker on Chicago's South Side, product of public schools who managed to get to Princeton, a life that is out of reach for more and more people. But she also represents the wife every straight man wants: beautiful, loyal and strong; the helper, the lover, "the rock." Charlie Bush, retired former president of UAW Local 402, which represents workers at International Truck and Engine in Springfield, told me he thought Michelle might be decisive in swaying the votes of more than a few men. She is like Hillary was in 1992, he said, "a supporter." An undecided Edwards voter when we met, Bush now says he's going with Hillary; his wife, Cheryl, is still undecided.

What united them all was a feeling that Democrats and Republicans alike have abandoned unions, the working class and cities like Springfield.

Springfield

"That white's kickin' in, isn't it?" a friend said as I told him about my last day in this town in Clark County, typically a swing county in elections. But first things first. There was once money here, lots of it. Mansions, some moldering, line High Street, along with Frank Lloyd Wright's 1906 Wescott House—saved from the wrecker's ball and now a museum. Before St. Louis, Springfield was the jumping-off point for the West, and for a time it was second only to Chicago for manufacturing in the Midwest. Not so long ago, International Harvester was the biggest private employer; today that title goes to a call center. International's workforce plunged from 4,500 to less than 1,000 over a six-year period through layoffs and outsourcing; it too has a new union contract allowing it to bring in new workers at about half the old $25 to $30 hourly rate. The call center pays $8 to $12. At CWA Local 4326, Paul Storms, an AT&T technician and the Local president, recited a litany of lost manufacturing: "Speco Aerospace, gone; Buffalo Road Roller, gone; Bomag earth movers, gone; White Motors, gone; Boise Cascade, gone; O-Cedar, gone; O.S. Kelly, gone; the foundries, gone; Robinson Meyers, gone." Solid, cheery housing in working-class parts of town—going, going and sometimes gone.

Manufacturing began moving to the nonunion South in the '80s; in the '90s NAFTA ensured that it would never come back. Storms summed up the situation: "Corporate America, you give 'em an inch, they take a mile, and in this case they've taken our lives." Springfield today is a go-between city for people working in Dayton or Marysville, at the nonunion Honda plant. Local 4326 itself has only fifty-three members. Mayor Warren Copeland is trying to create an information technology park to bring in higher-paid jobs. What has mainly kept the town from imploding is Wright Patterson Air Force Base and earmarks. According to Copeland, "Community Development Block Grants were cut, UDAG grants were cut; what substituted was earmarks"—up to $20 million annually. The source of that largesse, Appropriations Committee member Dave Hobson, is about to retire from Congress. Copeland, a white man, caucused for Obama in early January, when delegate slates were chosen. Three times as many people caucused for Hillary Clinton as for anyone else—almost all the professional politicians, the known party regulars, some unions. Edwards drew union people. Copeland, who has been in Democratic Party politics a long time, knew only one person in the Obama group.

"When people are running they have all kinds of plans," he went on. "Once they get in office, neither one of their plans is going to be adopted, so that's a crazy debate. I'm much more interested in whether they will help people down-ticket. I think Hillary will energize Republicans, and people down-ticket will be hurt." In 2004 the conservative churches, buoyed by Ohio's antigay initiative, called out all their people to vote, and wherever there was no strong union presence in the state, Kerry lost. He lost Clark County by 1,406 votes.

In a conversation with five CWA members, one mixed-race man was leaning toward Obama, one white man was for Hillary ("I'm 61, and ever since I've been alive there's been a man, and that's my big selling point; I'm curious to see if a woman would make a difference"), two other white men were undecided but said they would be happy with either, and the only woman in the Local, a middle-aged white Republican, said she would decide in the booth. She veered between appreciating Hillary's moxie to run and expressing wariness about a woman who took what Bill dished out and who has "her foot in the door of the good-old-boy network." What united them all was a feeling, not yet cynicism, that Democrats and Republicans alike have abandoned unions, the working class and cities like Springfield, and that no matter who wins in November once they get behind closed doors there is no counting on anything.

It is for that reason, along with the similarity of Clinton's and Obama's plans, that gender, race, hope, energy—the Democrats' equivalent of religion, abortion, marriage on the fundamentalist side—count for so much this year. Some white professionals I talked with here were favoring Obama. He is new and didn't vote for the war. We talked about racism and the critique that a vote for Obama only makes white people feel better about themselves. These white people, most in their 50s or early 60s, did not think racism was as pervasive as it had been, but even acknowledging that it exists, an electronics engineer at Wright Patterson said, "The flip side of that is that we should feel bad about *any* progress. Do we have to feel bad *all* the time?"

There is plenty to feel bad about. There are de facto whites-

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only private key clubs in Springfield. The city is segregated by race and class the way most cities are. A ride-around one afternoon with local Obama backers stopping at various intersections with homemade signs urging, HONK AND WAVE, OBAMA suggested a fair amount of white support, until the group got to a crossing in a predominantly white neighborhood whose fortunes have been tumbling. There expressions were set, grim, like their wearers meant it. No honks. No waves.

"This is Hillary Clinton's base," said Kimberly Beard. "They are Democrats, and they vote. I've lived here for fifty years; I know these people. They're scared, and they can't see that something can be done. They are disillusioned, disconnected from any economic development in the county and disappointed. I've lived in different cities, but I've always come home because I like to be in a place where I can spot a racist from fifty yards away." Beard worked for Jesse Jackson in 1984 and 1988. "He got a delegate here, which was virtually unheard of."

Later that night at the Disabled American Veterans key club, a bar that does not require disability or veteran status for entry, only $17 a year and sponsorship by a member, all of whom are white, the women said, "It's time for a woman," "Women are more compassionate." None of them were hankering for Bill. It was a little different with the men. "I'm for Hillary. I love Hillary," a middle-aged man declared with increasing volume. He is a registered Republican, but he voted for Bill in '92 and '96, for Kerry in '04. He said he's never done worse than he's doing now and wants someone who can "bring down the costs of this goddamned healthcare." Really, though, he said he wishes he could vote for Bill a third time. Entrepreneurs have capitalized on this, selling buttons saying, BRING BACK PEACE AND PROSPERITY and THE CLINTONS over an image of the two.

If Hillary doesn't get the nomination, this man said, he'd not only vote for but work for McCain, "and I hate McCain."

"Why not Obama?"

"He's too inexperienced."

"And why else?" a woman down the bar asked.

"Because he's black."

"Thank you!" she replied.

More talk, a little heat, and the man exclaimed, "I'm not going to vote for the nigger!"

Some in the bar seemed tensed; they were "undecided." The man goaded them; that's not what they had discussed the other day. He laughed. Another man from across the bar said he knew whom he wasn't voting for: "the nigger."

The first man continued to proclaim, "I love Hillary." He and a friend said she probably should take the VP spot if it were offered; even if Obama gets the nomination, "he's not going to make it." Later he apologized for saying "nigger"; "I'm not a racist." In the hallway a young worker said quietly that I shouldn't pay much attention to the man, that for what it was worth he himself was just trying to figure things out politically, was worried about schools for his two young sons and that most of all he was sick of all the division in the country.

Youngstown

No "bridge to the twenty-first century" was ever built here in the 1990s. In place of the biggest steel plants, which left in the '70s and '80s, there are nonunion mini-mills, a steel museum, nursing homes and two prisons. The state university, where Obama was speaking, graduates more corrections officers than teachers. It used to be good at engineering. Cecil Monroe, a black man, 65, who works for the county government, said he doesn't want his mixed-race daughter to come back here after college: "I think if she comes back, it's just going to be death and destruction." The city is about even black and white, and that seemed roughly the mix of the 6,000-plus people who came to hear Obama. Only 83,000 people live in Youngstown now. The labor historian and radical lawyer Staughton Lynd, 78, who lives in nearby Niles, said it was "the most integrated crowd I've seen in thirty-two years." Also the most easy-spirited. A number of white adults I spoke with had been led by their kids, many of them too young to vote.

The day before, I had been in Toledo, where Bill Clinton spoke to an overwhelmingly white crowd of about 1,000. As in 1992, he emphasized the high-tech future, this time in green technology. Toledo has some infrastructure for such things; Youngstown does not. What Youngstown has is desperation. In that circumstance, it is easy to see why feeling good is no small thing. This is not a liberal town, and even if class clichés were valid the crowd could not be described as "latte-drinking, Prius-driving, Birkenstock-wearing trust fund babies"—an insult the buffoonish president of the Machinists' Union, Tom Buffenbarger, threw at Obama supporters before introducing Hillary the next day at a Youngstown high school. The Obama rally was on Presidents' Day; people had the day off. Obama was introduced by a laid-off union pipefitter (white, female) carrying a baby in a sling. He ticked off the requisite class issues and took one brief, sharp shot at NAFTA, which drew big applause. But the greatest response was for issues of no direct consequence to Youngstown: closing Guantánamo, ending the debate on torture, restoring habeas corpus, restoring constitutional rights—in other words, righting the wrongs that have only added shame on top of desperation.

Brook Park

By the old math, this should be Hillary country: a white ethnic working-class suburb of Cleveland. It might be, and Hillary has a passionate surrogate in Anthony D'Amico, president of the Brook Park Democratic Club, a retired Teamster who can tick off her plans and forcefully make the change-through-experience argument. He has organized campaigns for years and was once a city councilman, but as we talked, with less than two weeks to go to the primary, he said no one from the Hillary campaign had contacted him. As he gauges it, neither campaign is visible on the ground, so people are scrambling to do things ad hoc. He puts no faith in the polls, the phone banking: "People are being very standoffish. They hold voting very sacred, and they don't want to tell you shit." There is one other wild card in the deck: "Brook Park used to be 1,000 percent Democratic. Years ago when I was growing up [in the mid-'60s], they're making the signs in the backyard with the hammer and nails." Before the 2005 elections he looked at the registration rolls from the town's four wards, and it shocked him: Democrats, 4,448; Republicans, 882; independents, 6,508. "If you'd asked me even a few years ago, I'd have said there is no way independents are the majority. There's where you want to roll the dice."

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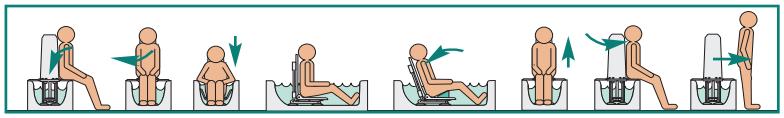
Introducing
The Neptune Reclining Bath Lift



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- *Charges overnight*
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- *Wide seat*
- *Extra-high backrest*
- *Folds for portability*
- *Chair raises up to 17″ and lowers to 3″*
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Powerful NiCad Battery

Includes waterproof remote!

Innovative European technology makes bathing safe, comfortable, and dignified.

It's a fact, Americans are living longer than ever. Medical technology has increased our life expectancy, but it hasn't necessarily improved our quality of life. For many people, living longer doesn't mean living better, as they lose their independence, dignity, and quality of life. Many have to move out of the home they love because they can no longer do simple things… like taking a bath… without someone's help. Now, an innovative company has used the latest technology to help millions of Americans stay safe, stay in their home, and enjoy a better quality of life. It's called the Neptune™ Reclining Bath Lift, and it's changing the way older Americans live.

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North Canton

"Who said there was going to be a giant sucking sound? They made a fool of him, but he was absolutely right." Out his office window Jim Repace, president of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 1985, could see the Hoover factory as he spoke. Hoover was once a Fortune 500 company, the number-one floor-care manufacturer in the world, the only unionized floor-care manufacturer in the country. A few years ago it was posting 30 percent profits; a few months ago it had workers disassembling machines right beside those still on the job. Now this beautiful 100-year-old brick specimen of a daylight factory is cold; 817 hourly workers (down from 2,400 as recently as 2000) will get full wages, health and pension benefits through June. Repace says the shutdown will affect 8,000 in the area; North Canton has a population of 16,000. Next-door to his office, the message board at St. Peter's Catholic Church reads, "God be our hope when life is difficult."

However profitable, Hoover could not compete here with its plants in Juárez/El Paso and China. The union went through the usual rounds of concessions and legal action to keep the plant open, and for fourteen years it almost worked. Hoover did some hiring in the '90s, but Repace could look toward other cities where NAFTA was killing plants, the broad scenario being a fight of all against all, with those left standing cutting living standards to avoid catastrophe. Behind the increases people saw in their CDs, the economy was going. No one who has not lived through this kind of shutdown can really understand the ruthlessness of it, or the fear that the pleasant streets around the plant, the park where workers ate lunch, are in preboarding for hell. NAFTA has not been emphasized in the election, and Repace says, "It's troubling me that it's not" because "it's still going on." He spent years defending Bill Clinton in the '90s, but "I'm just tired of the status quo. We've had eight years of Clinton, eight years of Bush. Enough is enough. I like a new perspective.... I truly believe Obama's going to go in there with something to prove. He is not going to want to be a failure."

A failure for whom is always the question. Sixteen years ago, at a blimp hangar a few miles away in Akron, 50,000 people cheered another fresh face in the general election. Bill Clinton played the working class, and if it were to repay him by proxy on March 4, '90s prosperity should finally enter the book of political fairy tales. However the vote turns, not just the people of Ohio will need some potent ways to show they won't be played again. ■

The Dean Legacy

The DNC chair has energized aging, ailing or previously nonexistent state parties.

by ARI BERMAN

On November 7, 2006, all the top Democrats graced the stage of the Hyatt Regency ballroom in Washington for a big election-night victory party. All of them, that is, except Howard Dean, chair of the Democratic National Committee (DNC). The party leadership had accused Dean of spending too much money on rebuilding moribund parties in red states and not enough on key Congressional races where Democratic pickups could strengthen their narrow majority. The results that night, as Democrats recaptured Congress, seemed to settle the argument in Dean's favor. But key Democrats, including Representative Rahm Emanuel, a former senior adviser to President Clinton, weren't satisfied, and Dean opted to stay away from the celebration, doing TV interviews instead. A week later, Democratic strategist James Carville, another prominent Clintonite, labeled the DNC leadership "Rumsfeldian in its competence," and called on Dean to resign. He floated the name of Harold Ford Jr., now chair of the right-leaning Democratic Leadership Council, as a replacement. There was rampant speculation inside the Beltway that Carville wasn't offering an unsolicited opinion but rather carrying water for the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee, Hillary Clinton.

Ari Berman is a Nation *contributing writer.*

REUTERS/JIM YOUNG

A few months earlier, *The New Republic* had reported that Clinton's camp was "laying the groundwork to circumvent the DNC in the event that Clinton wins the nomination." This shadow DNC had a number of integral parts: adviser Harold Ickes would develop state-of-the-art technology to help Clinton reach prospective voters; EMILY's List and Clinton's allies in organized labor would launch an unprecedented effort to turn out supporters, especially women voters; former DNC chair Terry McAuliffe would raise untold sums from wealthy donors and the business community; and communications honcho Howard Wolfson would direct an unrelenting war room. Ever

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What *Really* Is the Universe Made of? Welcome to the Dark Side

Tackle This Intriguing Cosmic Question with a Theoretical Physicist at the California Institute of Technology

There's more to the universe than meets the eye—a lot more. In recent years scientists have discovered that 95 percent of the contents of the cosmos is invisible to all of our current methods of direct detection. Yet something is definitely there, holding galaxies and galaxy clusters together, and governing the shape and fate of the universe.

Scientists call these invisible components dark matter and dark energy—"dark" because these phenomena don't emit light, not because we aren't learning more and more about them. Indeed, dark matter and dark energy are the most eagerly studied subjects in astronomy and particle physics today. And for good reason—what could be more exciting than cracking the mystery of the fundamental constituents and overall composition of the universe?

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You will find Dr. Carroll relaxed, eloquent, wryly funny, and brimming with ideas as he takes you on a voyage of scientific discovery: from the early 20th-century work of Albert Einstein in theoretical physics and Edwin Hubble in observational astronomy, who each contributed key insights to the revolutionary view of an expanding universe, to the powerful elaboration of these concepts that has brought us, for the first time in human history, to the brink of knowing what the universe is made of.

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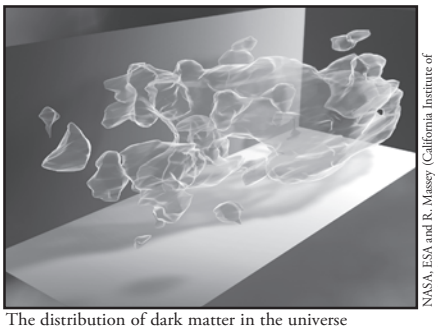

NASA, ESA and R. Massey (California Institute of Technology).

The distribution of dark matter in the universe

About Your Professor

Professor Sean Carroll is a Senior Research Associate in Physics at the California Institute of Technology. He received his Ph.D. in Astrophysics from Harvard, did postdoctoral research at MIT and UC Santa Barbara, and taught at the University of Chicago. He has received research grants from NASA, the U.S. Department of Energy, and the National Science Foundation. In 2006 he was awarded the Arts and Sciences Alumni Medallion from Villanova University.

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since 1992 the Clintons had used the DNC as an outpost for raising money from big donors, and funding candidates had taken precedence over nurturing progressive organizers. That model would continue into '08. Dean could remain at the DNC as a figurehead but only if he stayed in line.

And then the effort to marginalize Dean collapsed. Partly it's because the party's Congressional takeover—and a subsequent study by Harvard's Elaine Kamarck documenting Dean's contributions toward that end—eventually silenced the Carville-ites. Partly it's because Barack Obama forced the Clintons to devote all their resources to fending off his insurgent candidacy. But another reason the DNC-in-exile never got off the ground was Dean himself. Dean is no longer a marginalized figure, the butt of "Dean scream" jokes, but a man with a powerful constituency in regions where his fifty-state strategy has energized aging, ailing or previously nonexistent state parties. His support to these parties has not only strengthened them but has created an independent power base for Dean himself.

Dean has remained fastidiously neutral and low-key in this presidential cycle. Yet a number of his top supporters believe the Clinton-Obama contest has become a referendum on the kind of grassroots party building and citizen empowerment Dean pioneered as a presidential candidate and continued as DNC chair. On that issue most Deaniacs, not surprisingly, side with Obama. "Ever since the TV era began in 1960, every single presidential campaign in America has been top-down," says Joe Trippi, Dean's '04 campaign guru and an adviser to John Edwards before he dropped out of the race. "Only two have been bottom-up. One was Dean. The other is Obama."

In contrast to Clinton's campaign, Obama's—with its small-donor base, Internet buzz and red-state appeal—is closer to Dean's ideals.

The race for the Democratic nomination is a window into how the candidates view the future of the party, which is being shaped in large part by Dean's efforts. Are Clinton and Obama similarly committed to Dean's fifty-state strategy? How much faith would each, as the Democratic nominee, put in the party's grassroots? In the Internet era, the party is less about elder statesmen sitting in Washington than millions of people across the country organizing locally around issues and candidates. Dean and Obama have understood how the party is changing—and have embraced it. Clinton, thus far, has not.

Howard Dean and Bill Clinton were both pragmatic, moderate governors of rural states who shared an affinity for balanced budgets and free trade. But ever since Dean became a presidential candidate, his relationship with the Clintons has been rocky. His campaign was a striking repudiation of Clintonian centrism, which had urged Democrats to support the Iraq War and throw piles of money at TV ads in a few key swing states every two to four years rather than systematically invest in long-term party building, from the local level up. The Clintons even urged their old friend Gen. Wesley Clark to run against Dean. When Dean entered the race for DNC chair in January 2005, Bill Clinton asked McAuliffe to consider staying on. When he declined, Governors Bill Richardson and Ed Rendell were floated as possible replacements. In the end, the Clintons remained officially neutral, and Ickes, a key Clinton ambassador to the party's liberal wing, endorsed Dean for chair, giving his candidacy a huge boost. But the brief honeymoon didn't hold.

In his final years as DNC chair, McAuliffe had developed a list of Democratic donors and fundraisers. When Dean came in, state party chairs, who found McAuliffe's list ill suited to their needs, asked Dean to build a national voter database. He hired new consultants and spent $10 million expanding the voter file. The move angered McAuliffe, and Ickes launched his own database, which was widely viewed as a buttress to Clinton's presidential campaign and a challenge to Dean. "It's unclear what the DNC is doing," Ickes told the *Washington Post* in March 2006. The fight was more technical than ideological, yet it represented a public signal of "no confidence" in the DNC by the party's Beltway establishment, the *Post* reported.

Tensions have cooled since then, and both Clintons have voiced their support for Dean's fifty-state strategy. Yet in a larger sense, Hillary's candidacy represents the polar opposite of what Dean built as a candidate and party chair: her campaign is dominated by an inner circle of top strategists, with little room for grassroots input; it hasn't adapted well to new Internet tools like Facebook and MySpace; it tends to raise big contributions from a small group of high rollers rather than from large numbers of small donors; and it is less inclined to expand the base of the party.

On a number of occasions during this cycle, the Clinton campaign has questioned the DNC's authority. The first split came during the Nevada caucuses, when Clinton allies challenged the DNC over the validity of caucus sites that they thought favored Obama. The courts ruled in the DNC's favor, but the showdown in Nevada looked like small potatoes compared with the growing debate over whether to seat the Michigan and Florida delegates. The Clinton campaign's PR blitz in favor of seating them was a clear affront to Dean's leadership. "The DNC rule is *the rule*, and it's not going to change just because Clinton says we're going to change it," says one Dean confidant.

The DNC has played for time, urging the states to hold new contests or appeal to the DNC's credentials committee in June. "I have to be the referee, and my job is to bring people together at the end, because we cannot have a divided convention," Dean told *The Nation*. In an earlier interview, he'd said that if there's no nominee by April, he's prepared to get the two candidates in a room together and "work out what's best for the country." Dean, like many Democrats, is hoping such an arrangement won't be necessary.

In contrast to Clinton's campaign, Obama's—with its hundreds of thousands of small donors, Internet buzz and red-state appeal—reflects to a great extent the realization of Dean's ideals. Dean's argument for how to rebuild and expand the party base for the long term found its perfect short-term exponent in Obama, whose appeal to independ-

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HEALTHNEWS

Surgery Can't Fix Dark Circles!

Finally, researchers have developed the first product to combine a clinically proven compound to reduce those dark under-eye circles and simultaneously reduce fine lines and wrinkles, resulting in noticeably younger looking eyes.

—By Sarah Tucker

I can't tell you how often I'm told that I look tired because of the dark circles under my eyes. I guess some people don't realize how embarrassing this is...I have been plagued with dark circles since my early 20s! But finally I don't have to worry about them anymore since I found Hydrolyze.

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Despite what most people think, deep, dark circles under your eyes are not primarily caused by being tired or stressed. Instead, dermatologists and plastic surgeons agree that dark circles are caused by capillaries that leak blood close to the skin's surface. When this blood begins to oxidize, it turns a bluish red color, similar to an ugly bruise. And since the skin under the eyes is very thin, this leads to the appearance of those embarrassing bags and dark circles. The more transparent your skin and the more blood that pools under it, the darker the circles appear. And what's worse, this discoloration over time can become permanent!

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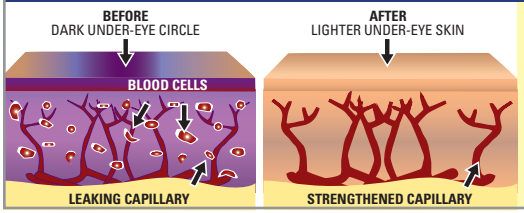

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ents and liberal Republicans and talk of "unity" is planting Democratic roots in unfamiliar places. "The Obama for President campaign is what all of us hoped Dean for President would become," says Steve McMahon, a former top Dean strategist who's stayed neutral in '08. "Obama is Dean 2.0, dramatically updated to reflect the emergence of the grassroots."

Stylistically and rhetorically, the brash and rumpled Dean and the smooth and graceful Obama couldn't be more different. Yet the link between the two dates back to '04, when the offshoot of Dean's presidential campaign, Democracy for America, supported Obama in the Illinois Senate race. Dean's advisers admit that Obama is a more inspirational and disciplined presidential candidate than was Dean, able to excite the Democratic base while bringing in new voters, energizing a new crop of organizers and expanding the electoral map. This is borne out by Obama's remarkable performance thus far in red states like Idaho, Alaska and Alabama—places where Dean has invested heavily. "From a progressive who wants to see Democrats compete in all fifty states, you'd have to give the nod to Obama," says Trippi.

In his sprint across the country before Super Tuesday, Obama wisely hit places where the party had barely existed years before. "They told me there weren't any Democrats in Idaho," Obama told a raucous crowd of 14,000 in Boise. "I didn't believe them." On Super Tuesday Obama won fifteen of Idaho's eighteen delegates and virtually swept the Midwest and Mountain West.

Besides a desire to push the party away from a strictly swing-state mentality, Dean and Obama share a commitment to the nuts-and-bolts of grassroots organizing. On the stump Obama is quick to stress his roots as a community organizer and always thanks his precinct captains, who routinely introduce him at campaign events. "Change doesn't happen from the top down. It happens from the bottom up," he now says in his stump speech. Obama's organizing has been greatly enhanced by new technologies like YouTube, Facebook and MySpace (Friendster had just arrived when Dean was running). "We pioneered it and Obama perfected it," Trippi says. Obama embraced elements of the new politics, hiring the co-founder of Facebook, for example; but other efforts came from the grassroots—just as with the Dean campaign—as supporters organized themselves online and on the ground. The net effect is Obama's large base of small donors, who are enthusiastic supporters he can tap again and again. Ninety percent of the $28 million he raised online in January, for example, came in donations of $100 or less. Obama has fused a tightknit group of advisers with a mass of ordinary people, creating what Trippi calls "command and control at the top while empowering the bottom to make a difference."

Trippi's book *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised* is required reading in a class that Obama's chief strategist, David Axelrod, teaches at Northwestern University. If the Obama campaign naturally understood what Dean was trying to do, even though Dean's candidacy ultimately fizzled, the Clintons did not. "They looked at '04 and said, If Howard Dean lost, those tools must not have worked," Trippi says. He cites Clinton's unwillingness to compete all-out in red-state caucuses as a main reason her campaign is in such a predicament. Markos Moulitsas of Daily Kos dubbed Clinton's approach—and subsequent discounting of her losses in red America—the "insult 40 states" strategy. While the Obama campaign prepared for the long haul, Clinton poured most of her resources into a few key early states, expecting to have the nomination wrapped up by Super Tuesday. "It's not a very long run," Clinton predicted in late December. "It'll be over by February 5."

Whoever wins the nomination would be well advised to keep Dean around through the general election. More important than the money he can raise is the consistency he represents, among the netroots and state party activists. "If the Clintons or anyone came in after winning the nomination and said, 'Thank you, Howard. You can go now,' it would be a very divisive and fractious fight," says one Dean adviser. "That's the last thing they'll need."

Because of the small number of Congressional battlegrounds in '06, strategists in DC like Chuck Schumer and Rahm Emanuel could at least make a persuasive case against the fifty-state strategy. But this fall, because of the vastly expanded number of competitive races, they'll have a much tougher brief. With contested Senate races and statewide contests (redistricting happens in 2010 and '11) in addition to a presidential election, many more states will be in play, strengthening the logic of the fifty-state strategy. "The tone and temperature of this argument will be diminished compared to '06," says Joe Andrew, 1991–01 chair of the DNC and a Clinton supporter. "There will be enough money to go around."

The way the '08 race has played out has made believers out of past Dean critics, like Clinton war room veteran Paul Begala. "I'm not a big Howard Dean fan," Begala admits. "But a lot of good things that are happening in this campaign have happened because of Dean." Begala credits him with pushing Democrats to oppose the war in Iraq, cultivating young voters and small donors, and urging the party to compete across the map.

Tradition dictates that whoever wins the White House will install his or her own regime in the DNC. Dean says that if a Democrat wins in November, he does not want to hang around the building past 2009. Yet few in the party believe it's possible, or preferable, to go back to targeting a dozen swing states every two or four years. "You cannot lurch from one election to the next with no game plan," Dean says. "I do believe the Democratic President is going to want a permanent political operation, and I think we're going to leave a very strong one here." Dean says the state party chairs have already persuaded Obama and Clinton to commit to funding the fifty-state strategy, which at a cost of $4 million to $5 million a year is a tiny fraction of the $300 million budgeted by the DNC for '08. "The one thing they should not get rid of is the fifty-state strategy," says Democratic strategist Donna Brazile. "We need to do more, not less."

Dean had the vision, but others will get or share the credit. It took an Obama to realize the potential of the Internet and grassroots organizing to transform politics. And it will take the commitment of future DNC chairs to the fifty-state strategy to continue building the party from the ground up. "You know the expression, to be a prophet without honor in your own land," says Steve Grossman, Dean's former campaign chair. "That's Howard Dean." ■

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Obama's Mercenary Position

He calls private security forces "unaccountable" but may use them in Iraq.

by JEREMY SCAHILL

A senior foreign policy adviser to leading Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama has told *The Nation* that if elected Obama will not "rule out" using private security companies like Blackwater Worldwide in Iraq. The adviser also said that Obama does not plan to sign on to legislation that seeks to ban the use of these forces in US war zones by January 2009, when a new President will be sworn in. Obama's campaign says that instead he will focus on bringing accountability to these forces while increasing funding for the State Department's Bureau of Diplomatic Security, the agency that employs Blackwater and other private security contractors. (Hillary Clinton's staff did not respond to repeated requests for an interview or a statement on this issue.)

Obama's broader Iraq withdrawal plan provides for some US troops to remain in Iraq—how many his advisers won't say. But it's clear that Obama's "follow-on force" will include a robust security force to protect US personnel in Iraq, US trainers (who would also require security) for Iraqi forces and military units to "strike at Al Qaeda"—all very broad swaths of the occupation.

"If Barack Obama comes into office next January and our diplomatic security service is in the state it's in and the situation on the ground in Iraq is in the state it's in, I think we will be forced to rely on a host of security measures," said the senior adviser. "I can't rule out, I won't rule out, private security contractors." He added, "I *will* rule out private security contractors that are not accountable to US law."

But therein lies a problem. The US Embassy in Iraq is slated to become the largest embassy in world history. If Obama maintains that embassy and its army of diplomats and US personnel going in and out of the Green Zone, which his advisers say he will, a significant armed force will be required for protection. The force that now plays that role is composed almost exclusively of contractors from Blackwater, DynCorp and Triple Canopy. And at present, these contractors are not held accountable under US law. Obama and a host of legal experts, including in the Justice Department, acknowledge that there may be no current US law that could be used to prosecute security contractors for crimes committed in Iraq, such as the killing of seventeen Iraqi civilians last September in Baghdad's Nisour Square.

Obama's proposed increase in funding to the diplomatic security division would ostensibly pave the way for a protective force composed entirely of US government personnel, but the process of building that force would likely take a long time. Short of dramatically reducing the US civilian and diplomatic presence in Iraq that necessitates such a security force, Obama may have no choice but to continue the contracting arrangements with firms like Blackwater if he is elected President.

The irony is that it was Senator Obama who sponsored a bill in February 2007 defining a legal structure to prosecute State Department contractor crimes in US courts. Obama staffers say they will "fight like hell to get it passed." But it may not pass before the next President takes power. Even if it does and Bush signs it, serious questions will remain unresolved about how contractor crimes can be monitored effectively. The senior adviser acknowledged that Obama could find himself in a situation where, as President, he continues using forces he himself has identified as "unaccountable." The Obama campaign, in other words, may have painted itself into a corner.

Obama campaign and Senate staffers characterize this as an inherited problem with no good alternatives. "We are in a situation where, because of bad planning and a series of disastrous policy choices by the Bush Administration, we're forced to rely on private security contractors," says the senior adviser. "What we're focused on at the moment is getting the legal architecture in place that will hold these guys accountable to the same standard that [applies to] enlisted US military personnel."

In Iraq right now, the number of private contractors is basically equal to the number of US troops. While Obama advisers say they plan to "have a serious look" at the role of contractors in Iraq, one adviser seemed to indicate that unarmed contractors would continue to operate at significant levels. "These contractors are not only providing private security functions like Blackwater. They're rebuilding schools, they are serving food, they're doing logistics, they're driving trucks, and the important question is, If you take those 100,000-plus contractors out of Iraq, what do you replace them with? Inevitably the answer is, You replace them with US military."

But, the senior adviser notes, "ideally we would have diplomatic security personnel, US government personnel, not subcontracted but US Bureau of Diplomatic Security agents providing security to all our ambassadors."

Says another Obama adviser, "If we could start this whole war from the beginning, what would we have done versus what can we do now, now that we're in the middle of it? In an ideal world, we would not have these contractors, but that's not the world we operate in right now."

The State Department has only an estimated 1,450 diplomatic security agents worldwide who are actual government employees, and only thirty-six are deployed in Iraq. In contrast, Blackwater has nearly 1,000 operatives in Iraq alone, not to mention the hundreds more working for DynCorp and Triple Canopy. Moreover, the State Department says it could take years to identify prospective new agents, vet them, train them and deploy them. In short, this would be no small undertaking by a President Obama. As Ambassador Ryan Crocker said in late 2007, "There is simply no way at all that the State Department's Bureau of Diplomatic Security could ever have enough full-time personnel to staff the security function in

Jeremy Scahill, author of Blackwater: The Rise of the World's Most Powerful Mercenary Army *(Nation Books), is a Puffin Foundation Writing Fellow at The Nation Institute.*

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Iraq. There is no alternative except through contracts."

Making diplomatic security a military operation would pose serious challenges as well. As the *New York Times* reported late last year, "the military does not have the trained personnel to take over the job." Even if the military trained a specialized force for executive protection and bodyguarding in Iraq, this arrangement would mean more US military convoys traveling inside Iraq, potentially placing them in deadly conflict with Iraqi civilians on a regular basis.

The private security industry knows well that it has become a central part of US policy in Iraq and Afghanistan. Extricating the firms from this position would require a major and aggressive undertaking with significant Congressional support, which is by no means guaranteed. In fact, Blackwater appears to see a silver lining in the prospect of US forces being withdrawn or reduced in Iraq. Joseph Schmitz, chief operating officer of Blackwater's parent company, The Prince Group, said, "There is a scenario where we could as a government, the United States, could pull back the military footprint, and there would then be more of a need for private contractors to go in." The Obama senior adviser called Schmitz's comment "an unfortunate characterization."

Illinois Democrat Jan Schakowsky, one of Congress's sharpest critics of the war contracting system, says of Schmitz's remark, "That's why some of us have been really careful about not just talking about a troop withdrawal but a contractor withdrawal as well." Obama, she says, should make it impossible for Schmitz and others "to think that Barack Obama would be creating new opportunities for Blackwater after our troops are withdrawn." The clearest way for him to do that would be to endorse legislation banning the use of Blackwater and other mercenary firms in Iraq. In November Schakowsky and Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders introduced the Stop Outsourcing Security (SOS) Act, which mandates that US personnel undertake all diplomatic security in Iraq within six months of enactment. The bill has twenty-three co-sponsors in the House and one—Sanders—in the Senate. Sanders said he'd "love" it if Obama and Clinton signed on. "If either of them came on board, we'd certainly see more Democratic support," says Sanders. Will Obama do that before November? "The answer is no, in all candor," says the senior Obama adviser. "Obviously it's a dynamic situation, and he'll continue to analyze it."

Schakowsky is pressing Obama to support the bill and says that if he becomes President she will urge him to "cancel" any remaining Blackwater contract in Iraq: "There's plenty of justification to say this company is trouble, and there's no point in continuing our contract with them."

The senior adviser said, "Senator Obama is concerned that Blackwater remains in Iraq, and he's concerned that they remain in Iraq and other countries totally unaccountable to US law and totally unaccountable to the law in the country in which they are operating." Which raises the question: If he's so concerned, why not throw his support behind a ban on the use of these forces in Iraq? ■

Letters

(continued from page 2)

With all her faults, Hillary Clinton is much stronger on healthcare and other domestic issues. She has been tested. Obama has not. The zeitgeist, and Clinton, are moving in a progressive direction. It is high time we had a woman in the White House.
George Dargo

Chevy Chase, Md.
I have supported Obama from the very start because he is very inspiring and is trying to engage ordinary folks in politics and civic life. After his election to the Senate, he was invited to join the DLC, and he refused! I think the election of a black man with a commitment to the poor and the ability to attract a sizable white vote would be close to revolution in a society still burdened with the legacy of slavery.
M. Siddique

Hadley, Mass.
All the white boys are freaking out over this woman candidate. Obama is being given such a pass on details. Obama and Clinton are not that different on the issues—he is in fact to the right of her on many things. This is a boy thing, I am convinced.
Barbara Johnson

Cary, N.C.
Obama cannot win the Southern states in November. If he is the nominee, the Republican smear machine will roll out in full force. Once the right-wing pundits start stressing Barack's middle name, Middle America will flock to the polls to vote for John McCain.
Cheryl Walniuk

Ferndale, Mich.
We are told Obama is the one we must throw our support behind. Why? Because he's popular and conciliatory. Well, I don't want a conciliatory nice guy. Unless Obama loses the vague bon mots where policy statements belong, I'm not interested.
Douglas Campbell

Cherry Hill, N.J.
I am enthusiastically supporting Barack Obama because I believe he will bring about the changes our nation so badly needs by working with members of both parties. Obama has proven he can work with those whose views differ from his to find common ground and get legislation passed to benefit all Americans.
Mark Jeffery Koch

Et Data et Criteria et Bacteria, et Cetera…

State College, Pa.
When I read the first three words, "The media are," of Katha Pollitt's February 4 column, my heart leaped up. Someone remembers that "media" is a plural! The fellowship thus established enhanced the ethos of a writer whose work I already respect. Complimenting a writer's grammar may seem mere pedantry. But I argue that remembering what words mean should be a requirement for anyone who would enter the public conversation and that as we forget what words mean, it becomes harder to remember what anything means.
J.D. Shuchter

Two Corrections of Last Week's Issue

In the "Noted" item on Joshua Kors's George Polk Award, it should have said that the VA "refused care to soldiers by misdiagnosing them with 'personality disorder,'" not PTSD.

The photographs accompanying Tom Hayden's "The Old Revolutionaries of Vietnam" should have been credited to Barbara Williams.

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Books & the Arts.

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An engraving shows a Protestant vendor refusing to kneel as a Catholic priest passes through Bergen op Zoom with the Eucharist in 1553.

Good Faith

by DANIEL LAZARE

Other than outright jihadis like Osama bin Laden and hard-core Zionist settlers in the West Bank, most people would agree that religious zealotry is out of control and ought to be reined in. The question is how to do it. On one side of the debate are the hards, those militant atheists who argue that the problem is not so much religious discord as religion itself, an idea that has given rise to repeated horrors not because it is misapplied or misunderstood but because it is false and therefore a poor guide to reality. Bad theories lead to bad outcomes, which is why the best way to deal with theism is to do to it what Copernicus did to Ptolemy, or Darwin to Lamarck—finish it off as quickly as possible so the world can move on.

On the other side are the softs, those nice ecumenicists who contend that since it's unlikely that the world's believers will endorse the writings of Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris and Daniel Dennett anytime soon, we had all better learn to live together in our present state. Religion is therefore tolerable as long as it's not used as a justification to harass thy neighbor or condemn him to hell over minute theological differences. Call it the Kumbaya coalition, if you will.

Although it is uncertain how David Levering Lewis fits into this debate based on his seriously misconceived new book, *God's Crucible*, there is no doubt as to Benjamin Kaplan. Judging from *Divided by Faith*, his account of the elaborate measures that small groups of Catholics and Protestants took to keep the peace during the wars of religion of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, he is what might be called a hard-core softie, a fanatical believer in religious compromise as the key to preventing conflict. Whereas other historians of the era chronicle all the horrible things that the religious combatants did to one another—Germany suffered more mass devastation in the Thirty Years War of 1618–48 than it did during World War II—he describes the ingenious mechanisms Europeans employed to avoid killing one another in the name of a peace-loving Christ. Since such measures were mainly modest and small-scale, the result is history with the big stuff like wars, treaties and affairs of state left out and the minor adjustments and adaptations left in. Exciting it's not. But since life is often unexciting (especially when it's peaceful), Kaplan's version of how people got along in between the era's great battles and confrontations is not unimportant.

We learn from Kaplan that because lords and knights in sixteenth-century Austria enjoyed the right to hold Protestant services in their castles, houses and estates, Protestants in nominally Catholic Vienna would parade through the streets every Sunday morning on their way to some nearby Protestant nobleman's estate, where they would worship freely before heading back home. No one killed them as a consequence of their *Auslauf* ("walking out"), no one arrested them and no one drove them into exile, no small thing in the fraught climate

Divided by Faith
Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe.
By Benjamin J. Kaplan.
Belknap/Harvard. 415 pp. $29.95.

God's Crucible
Islam and the Making of Europe, 570–1215.
By David Levering Lewis.
Norton. 473 pp. $29.95.

Daniel Lazare is the author, most recently, of The Velvet Coup: The Constitution, the Supreme Court, and the Decline of American Democracy *(Verso). He is currently at work on a book about the politics of Christianity, Judaism and Islam for Pantheon.*

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of the 1570s, when Dutch Protestants and Catholic Habsburgs were battling in the Netherlands and English Puritans were clamoring for the head of Mary, Queen of Scots. In Strasbourg and the southern German towns of Ulm and Biberach, all dominated by Protestants, it was the Catholics who marched every Sunday so they could pray outside the city walls. In Danzig (now Gdansk, Poland), Socinians (otherwise known as Unitarians) marched to the nearby villages of Busków and Straszyn, while in Hamburg Mennonites marched to Altona, now a nearby suburb. All did so unmolested, even though elsewhere in Europe such displays would have been explosive.

Under a policy known as "simultaneum," Catholics and Protestants in biconfessional (dual religious) cities even learned to share the same church. If this sounds unremarkable, consider what would happen today if some rabidly Zionist rabbi and a firebrand imam were required to share the same synagogue or mosque. In liberal Holland—about which an English diplomat once remarked, "Religion may possibly do more good in other places, but it does less harm here"—the problem was how to square the freedom of conscience guaranteed by the Union of Utrecht, the 1579 treaty that gave rise to the Dutch republic, with the religious monopoly of the Dutch Reformed Church. The treaty allowed the Dutch to believe in any religion they liked but to practice only one. What to do? With their usual pragmatism, the Dutch settled on a policy of official conformity and unofficial laxity, a policy exemplified by the tiny *schuilkerken* (literally, "house churches") that members of Holland's substantial Catholic minority were permitted to build in attics, backrooms and courtyards. Cozy and *gemütlich*, these were the antithesis of the grandiose Baroque structures springing up in Catholic territories. Lacking such outward displays as crosses, bells or towers, they were nonetheless richly outfitted with altars, galleries, organs and vaulted roofs. Since keeping a low profile was essential, one such *schuilkerk* entered into an elaborate agreement with the Amsterdam town fathers not to park sleds out front, not to allow crowds to congregate or parade through the streets and not to schedule services so that parishioners would interfere with crowds of Protestant worshipers heading off to their own churches.

By seventeenth-century standards, such restrictions were so mild as to be positively disorienting. In 1660 a Dutch Mennonite named Thieleman van Braght waxed nostalgic for the good old days when his group was the most harshly treated sect in the country. Mennonites had stood bravely by their faith during the years of persecution, but with liberalization, he complained, had come a "pernicious worldly-mindedness," a decline in morals and a falling away of religious ardor. Just as the worst way to torture a masochist is to treat him nicely, the worst way to treat a would-be religious martyr is to bombard him with tolerance.

Clearly, then, minor adjustments to religious practice did for a time succeed in preventing religious strife in the early modern era, which is one reason Kaplan celebrates them. But there is another reason: they are all pre-Enlightenment measures instituted at a time when secularism was still in its infancy. After a detailed discussion of *schuilkerken*, Sunday parades and the like, *Divided by Faith* concludes by arguing that the age of secularization that the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia supposedly ushered in with the conclusion of the Thirty Years War may not have been as deeply rooted as is usually thought. Religious persecution was ostensibly on the wane, yet Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes in 1685, depriving Protestant Huguenots of their civil rights and sending some 300,000 of them into exile. Shortly after, the Duke of Savoy succumbed to intense French pressure by summarily ordering descendants of medieval heretics known as the Waldensians to convert to Catholicism. When they revolted instead, he imprisoned some 9,000 of them for months, stood by as two-thirds of them died from their confinement and then sent the rest on a forced march through the snow-covered Alps to Switzerland. From 1702 to 1705, Protestants and Catholics traded tit-for-tat atrocities in the South of France in a particularly brutal conflict known as the War of the Cévennes. In 1731 Catholic authorities expelled some 19,000 Lutherans from the archbishopric of Salzburg, Austria. As late as 1780, rioting and mass destruction erupted in London in response to a modest bill in Parliament aimed at removing a few of the anti-Catholic legal indemnities left over from the previous century. Enlightened sectors of society had assumed that religious hatred was a thing of the past. But the Gordon Riots—named for the flamboyant Lord George Gordon, leader of the Protestant Association—showed that antipapism was still a force to be reckoned with.

Kaplan says the Enlightenment has been oversold: secularism didn't dispel the medieval fog.

All these episodes of religious-fueled strife lead Kaplan to a bold and simple conclusion: the Enlightenment has been oversold. The story of a new spirit of secularism chasing away the medieval fog is, he writes,

> an ideological construct that perpetuates our ignorance. It is a myth, not only in being at variance with known facts, but in being a symbolic story, with heroes and villains and a moral—a story told about the past to explain or justify a present state of affairs. According to this myth, toleration triumphed in the eighteenth century because reason triumphed over faith. It triumphed because religion lost its hold on people, and hence its importance as a historical phenomenon.

To the contrary, Kaplan argues that the Enlightenment did not filter down to the masses for the most part and that, in the countryside at least, churches remained as crowded as ever. Rather than suffer a loss of influence, religion changed. New forms of pietism arose among Catholics and Protestants that were private and individualistic. A new generation of theologians argued that there was nothing in religion at odds with strengthening state institutions, educating the masses or upgrading manners and morals. Where previously the Holy Roman Empire had been a bastion of reaction, Emperor Joseph II issued his famous Patents of Toleration in the 1780s declaring that faith is not something that can be forced but "a gift of God." While Catholicism was still the "only saving faith," there was nothing the authorities could or should do with the "unhappy wretches" who refused to accept it other than entrust them to God's mercy. "Without this approach," Joseph said, "we shall not save any greater number of souls, and we shall lose a great many more useful and essential people." The "welfare of the state" and Christian teachings both demanded toleration.

Kaplan does not flinch when it comes to suggesting what all this might mean for global politics in the twenty-first century. Instead of swallowing the Enlightenment line that religion is the enemy, he says, we should recognize that "bona fide religion" comes in all shapes and sizes and that not all

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are fanatical and intolerant. Rather than defending the myths of the eighteenth century, we should look to the practical, small-bore achievements of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: "As limited, tension-ridden, and discriminatory as their accommodations and arrangements were, they can open our eyes to the unique qualities of the toleration we practice today and the possibility of other options." Instead of battling the religious tide, we should concentrate on steering it in a more benign direction.

It's a tempting story, but an erroneous one. Contrary to *Divided by Faith*, secularization did not begin with the Enlightenment but instead emerged during a considerably earlier period. Its origins can be traced back to the rise of the *politiques* during the French wars of religion of the 1560s and after—people like Jean Bodin, the theorist who invented the modern concept of political sovereignty, and King Henry IV, whose famous remark, "Paris is well worth a mass," which the king supposedly uttered after converting from Protestantism to Catholicism in 1593, summed up the growing view that religion was an impediment to statecraft. Religious zealotry was obviously growing, but so too was the realization that sectarian warfare was a dead end, a view amply confirmed by the Thirty Years War. As Swedish, Danish, French, Dutch, Spanish and German troops rampaged across the countryside, religious considerations disappeared amid a welter of bloody betrayals and cynical backstairs deals so convoluted that it is still hard to sort them all out. By the time the slaughter was over, swarms of practical, hard-nosed *politiques* had descended on Westphalia to sort out the mess. With negotiators apportioning churches and jurisdictions among the various denominations, it was plain that their chief concern was not the victory of any one sect but putting a lid on the violence so Germany could recover.

Pace Kaplan, religion was a spent force before the Age of Reason came along. In fact, its exhaustion is what paved the way for the eighteenth-century pietism he celebrates. Not unlike the *schuilkerken* of the seventeenth century, pietism reflected a new appreciation that religion was increasingly explosive as a public force and could be defused only by being privatized forthwith. Instead of parading about with crucifixes, it was better to retreat into the vastness of the individual soul. Kaplan advances a tortuous argument to the effect that the shock that the freethinker Pierre Bayle expressed over Louis XIV's revocation of the Edict of Nantes was a tacit admission that the Enlightenment did not go very deep. After all, if Louis's action showed that Catholicism was as "savage and intractable" as ever, as Bayle put it, then conditions were little changed. But Bayle's reaction shows the opposite. The Enlightenment created a new frame of reference, one that changed the way people looked at political events. As a consequence, what was formerly normal was now seen as intolerable. Whereas before, someone like Bayle would have merely shrugged at some religious atrocity or other, he was now beside himself with indignation. Intolerance of one sort had to rise so that another sort could fall.

God's Crucible is essentially a stirring—and confusing—narrative in search of a theme.

In retrospect, the small-scale arrangements Kaplan extols seem like stopgaps or, worse, ways of filling up the time between explosions. Plainly, the Protestants who strolled through Vienna on their way to a private service singing "Maintain us, Lord, within thy word,/And fend off murd'rous Pope and Turk" were not seeking to ingratiate themselves with their Catholic neighbors. Instead, they were shouting defiance and steeling themselves for the next confrontation. What would be the equivalent of the *Auslauf* in today's Middle East—Shiite Muslims parading through Baghdad singing "Maintain us, Allah, and fend off the murd'rous Sunnis"? Or perhaps Jewish settlers chanting "Down with Islam" as they smash their way through the streets of Hebron?

It is quixotic to expect forces like these to act peaceably. While religion is not always intolerant, any ideology that elevates faith over such mundane considerations as reason and evidence is always prey to fanaticism. Meanwhile, it is impossible not to notice a hint of coercion in Kaplan's defense of "bona fide religion" as a possible force for peace and cooperation. What can this possibly mean—only those religions (or strains thereof) that meet Kaplan's ecumenical standard are "in good faith" and therefore worthy of support, while the ornery ones that insist they're right and everyone else is wrong are not? By the same token, what does this mean for the legions of irate atheists who also insist that they are the only ones who are right? Do they have a place in Kaplan's concordat? Or are they also too disruptive?

Rather than empowering "good" religions and repressing "bad" ones, which is what such distinctions imply, the solution, once again, lies in imposing peace by strictly subordinating religion to the needs of modern society. Whether this requires religion's marginalization, it certainly requires its neutering. Kaplan's postmodern skepticism vis-à-vis religion, progress and science may still be trendy in some quarters (although distinctly less so in the Age of W, with its anti-Darwinism and hostility to science in general). But it is not helping matters. *Divided by Faith* is proof that bad history can lead to bad prescriptions about contemporary politics—and vice versa.

Such confusion is also evident in *God's Crucible*, an account of Islamic-Christian warfare over the course of some seven centuries. Although occasionally vivid and exciting, *God's Crucible* is essentially a case of a stirring narrative in search of a theme. The nearest Lewis comes to finding one is when he argues that the Franks were wrong to resist a Saracen incursion in 732. If the Moors had prevailed at the Battle of Poitiers (or Tours, as it is also known), Europeans not only would have been exposed to astronomy, trigonometry and Greek philosophy—all of which Muslims knew but Christians did not—but also would have gained entrée to "a cosmopolitan, Muslim *regnum* unobstructed by borders…one devoid of a priestly caste, animated by the dogma of equality of the faithful, and respectful of all religious faiths." Indeed, Lewis calculates that they would have leapt ahead by exactly 267 years, nearly to the year 1000, that is. But since it was the Franks who won, Europe was doomed to continue on a path that *God's Crucible* characterizes as "economically retarded, balkanized…fratricidal." By "defining itself in opposition to Islam," Lewis writes, Europe wound up making a virtue "out of religious persecution, cultural particularism, and hereditary aristocracy." The result, it would seem, has been religious warfare, riots in Parisian *banlieues* and rising levels of economic inequality. Evidently, we're still paying the price.

It would be nice to report that Lewis, a professor at NYU and the author of a Pulitzer Prize–winning biography of W.E.B. Du Bois, is being satirical in suggesting that the West would have been better off

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going Muslim. But he is all too serious. Perhaps hearing a long line of historians from Edward Gibbon to Victor Davis Hanson describe Charles Martel's triumph at Poitiers as a victory for civilization got Lewis's dander up to the point that he decided to write a book saying the opposite. In any event, the basic problem with *God's Crucible* has to do with the linkage of Islam and cultural advancement, a connection Lewis seems to regard as so simple and self-evident as to render further thought unnecessary. Since tenth-century Córdoba was a large and glittering city—"the brilliant ornament of the world," in the judgment of a visiting Saxon nun named Hroswitha of Gandersheim—at a time when Paris was little more than a country town, then, no doubt about it, it was the Muslims who were ahead and the Christian Franks who were behind.

What Lewis fails to recognize is that while a society can be deficient in some respects, it can be advanced in others that eventually prove more important, even if the benefits are not immediately apparent. Lewis points out that the caliphate had a sophisticated system of taxation while the Franks had virtually no tax system at all. But the absence of a tax system was a relief to the peasantry, since it meant that the economic burdens on them would remain comparatively light. He notes that the Muslim emir Abd al-Rahman I had a sophisticated army at his command, whereas all Charlemagne had was a promise from his nobles to assemble every spring with their horses, armor and weaponry. But Rahman I's army was a slave force, whereas Charlemagne's was free, which is no doubt why the Christian side eventually came out on top.

Lewis further notes that gold coinage had disappeared from Western Europe, especially the portion of Northern France controlled by the Franks; that trade had come to a near standstill; that spices, jade and other imported luxuries "were dimmest memories"; and that the Western European economy had cut itself off from "the Mediterranean engine that had once quickened it." This is all quite true. But he also observes that "food, however, was plentiful" in the Frankish territories, that cattle breeding had improved and that production of brine-preserved fish "made for an energy-fueled diet sufficient to grow the big-boned frames of the typical blond Frank warrior." The question, which he does not address, is what one had to do with the other, what a decline in trade had to do with a rising level of agricultural productivity.

Very much, in fact. In pulling away from the Mediterranean, Northern Europe was indeed closing in on itself. Economic isolation of this sort did not result in economic decline, as Lewis all too readily assumes, but in what sociologist Michael Mann describes as a process of economic intensification. As trade contracted, lords and peasants turned their attention to raising output on their estates and plots of land. Since rents were comparatively low and taxes nonexistent, peasants had an incentive to boost productivity. Humble but important technological innovations began to spread as a consequence: the water mill, the heavy iron plow, the three-crop rotational system (which allowed each field to be used a third more often), plus the horseshoe, the horse collar and more efficient types of harnesses. The upshot was more effective use of animal power, more efficient transport and, from the ninth century through the early thirteenth, a doubling in crop yields, a breakthrough that economic historian Georges Duby has rightly described as the first great agricultural revolution.

Frankish society was rude and unpolished, in other words, but economically dynamic. It was also, relatively speaking, free. Whereas slavery on the northern side of the Pyrenees essentially disappeared by the eleventh century, it remained as widespread as ever on the other. The balkanized European power structure that Lewis decries was equally a two-edged sword. It was inefficient, certainly, but also made autocracy unthinkable. Indeed, that is why Charlemagne's empire ultimately collapsed. The Byzantine political methods that he imported failed to work amid the highly complex structures of the West.

What would have happened if the Muslims had prevailed at Poitiers and then marched to Paris? Assuming they imposed their social system on the Franks' realm rather than looting and moving on, the results might well have been a victory for civilization. But it would have been civilization of a highly autocratic type. Detaching itself from the Mediterranean turned out to be the best thing European society could do, because it ended up charting a different course. Lewis is right to be outraged by the sort of Eurocentric arrogance that leads to denigration of the Muslim world's legitimate cultural achievements. But an equal and opposite Islamocentrism is no less absurd. Whereas his goal is to heal the breach between Islam and the West, the real task is to come up with a revivified Enlightenment frame of reference that renders the entire split irrelevant. ■

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REUTERS/CHINA DAILY INFORMATION CORP

A 1-year-old chimpanzee named Wanxing has a snack at a supermarket in Hefei, China.

Banana Kings

by EMILY BIUSO

The banana is the most popular fruit in the country, and apparently the most popular fruit among publishers this year. Two new books detail the history of the fruit itself and the torrid past of the banana industry, which is dominated by the ubiquitous, oppressive United Fruit Company. With similarly ambitious titles—*Bananas: How the United Fruit Company Shaped the World* and *Banana: The Fate of the Fruit That Changed the World*—the books promise not a dull, compulsory soup-to-nuts account of the subject but a tale of corporate skulduggery, an irreversible lesson in agricultural folly and a musing on the banana's place on our collective palate. A reader may be forgiven for wondering whether the story of a simple, unassuming fruit could provide such intrigue. Have Peter Chapman and Dan Koeppel bitten off more than they can chew? No, for as both authors demonstrate with convincing arguments, the impact of United Fruit's banana on multinational corporate malfeasance, current agricultural practices and food consumption patterns is no small, sweet-smelling thing.

Chapman's scope is narrower and more direct than Koeppel's. A British reporter who has been following United Fruit since the 1970s, when he wrote his thesis on the company at the University of Sussex, Chapman has written an impressive indictment of a deeply flawed corporation. And there's no shortage of material here; United Fruit (known now as Chiquita) was truly a terrorizing company—a kind of Halliburton, McDonald's, Nike and Archer Daniels Midland all rolled into one. United Fruit set the precedent for the propaganda, exploitation and imperialism of modern-day corporate plunderers.

Bananas
How the United Fruit Company Shaped the World.
By Peter Chapman.
Canongate. 224 pp. $24.

Banana
The Fate of the Fruit That Changed the World.
By Dan Koeppel.
Hudson Street. 281 pp. $23.95.

In many ways, United Fruit was the original agribusiness—if an accidental one. The seeds of the company began with Minor Keith, a young Brooklyn entrepreneur who ventured into the Costa Rican jungle in the 1870s to build a national railroad. The project cost more than 5,000 workers their lives but birthed a successful side business. In cleared areas of the jungle Keith planted banana cuttings to sell to the workers and eventually to an American schooner captain who hooked him up with Andrew Preston, the Boston importer with whom he would officially launch United Fruit in 1899. Their timing was good, as Americans were beginning a love affair with the exotic fruit that seemed the quintessence of upper-class privilege.

United Fruit was not the first company to introduce the banana to Americans, but it was the most successful in making it widely available. As the American appetite for the fruit grew, so too did the corporation's appetite for market dominance. Pursuing profits and fleeing diseases afflicting their crops, the United Fruit men skipped from one country to the next in Central and South America, perfecting their pattern: strong-arm their way in; destroy natural habitat to make way for banana plantations; enslave the native population in low-wage, dangerous servitude; suppress labor movements; watch their banana crops fall prey to blight; spray the groves with toxic pesticides that also poisoned the workforce; and, when spraying failed, abandon the land for greener pastures on which to inflict their "progress." This explains why countries in the region came to be known as "banana republics," a term first coined by O. Henry in his 1904 novel *Cabbages and Kings*. The behavior also earned the company an enduring nickname: El Pulpo—the octopus. And no wonder: By the late 1920s, United Fruit was an international conglomerate, outstretched tentacles everywhere. The company owned 1.6 million acres of land, employed 67,000 workers and did business in thirty-two countries. It was worth more than $100 million and would stop at nothing to keep business humming.

The company played a major role in fomenting political unrest in countries whose policies didn't favor its bottom line. These included the 1910 coup in Honduras orchestrated by Sam Zemurray, future president of United Fruit, and the 1954 overthrow of the Guatemalan ruling government, encouraged by the corporation and carried out by the CIA. Capitalizing on the anti-communist hysteria of the day, the corporation lobbied the US government and the United Nations to oust Jacobo Arbenz, the country's president, after he expropriated its plantations as part of a vast land-reform effort. The Guatemalan coup, dubbed Operation Success, left more than 200,000 Guatemalans dead.

United Fruit's brutal tactics extended, naturally, to labor issues. Low wages and dangerous working conditions were the norm, and any attempt by the workers to assert their rights was met with harsh consequences. In 1928 thousands of striking United Fruit workers in Colombia gathered in a town square to call for a six-day week, an eight-hour day, free medical treatment and wages paid in cash rather than scrip redeemable only at the company store. Government troops were called into the square to protect US interests, and after giving a five-minute

Emily Biuso is on the editorial staff of The New York Times Magazine.

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warning, the Colombian military fired on the crowd with machine guns. The strike was broken and the massacre covered up. No one knows how many were killed that day—it's widely believed that the bodies were buried in the forest or dumped in the sea—but a United Fruit estimate (likely low) put fatalities at more than 1,000. Gabriel García Márquez drew on the event in his 1967 novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude*.

Chapman views the case of United Fruit as a moral lesson for businesses, consumers and citizens; he concludes his tale with an excoriation, chiding not only the company but also the forces—namely, us—that allow its familiar (if extreme) story to play out over and over again: "We continually put ourselves in a position to be surprised. We assume the best…we are shocked when it is revealed that we have been 'sold' a lie. Then we get embarrassed and try to forget, as we did with United Fruit.… Today's advocates of multinational power would have us all as banana republics."

Koeppel focuses on the other casualty of United Fruit's policies: the banana. There are more than 1,000 varieties of banana worldwide, but most Americans don't know this because they are offered a single kind in grocery stores: the Cavendish. In the early days, the banana men cultivated one kind of banana: the Gros Michel. It was easy and cheap to grow and transport, and United Fruit used the heavy hand of modern propaganda to convince consumers that their one type of banana was the only type of banana. It set up an official "education department" that produced pamphlets and other materials to hook children; it hired doctors to endorse the practice of feeding infants mashed bananas; it convinced cereal companies to line their packaging with coupons for free bananas so that consumers could more easily prepare the recommended breakfast of corn flakes and sliced bananas. Not everyone was impressed with the marketing scheme. In a letter to a friend in 1904, Edith Wharton bemoaned the vulgarity of Americans: "What a horror it is for a whole nation to be developing without a sense of beauty, and eating bananas for breakfast."

The banana tycoons were able to conquer the American palate, but they couldn't triumph over nature. In 1903 Panama disease, a banana-killing illness transported by soil and water, appeared in Central America. In 1910 the first banana genetics lab opened in Costa Rica, but an enduring friction emerged: should scientific research focus on breeding disease-resistant fruit or on concocting stronger and harsher pesticides and chemicals to fight the blight? The banana men chose the latter and continued to do so throughout the following decades. But though an excess of chemicals may have initially stopped the spread of disease, it bred other problems: illness in workers, tainted food and eventually plants unresponsive to the pesticides' effects. Indeed, in 1935 a new banana-killing malady called Sigatoka appeared. Again, United Fruit protected its crop with chemistry: a potent cocktail called Bordeaux Mixture, which had the nasty side effects of turning workers' skin blue and stealing their sense of smell and their ability to keep food down. It killed an unknown number of banana laborers. By 1960, when the Gros Michel had been rendered extinct by Panama disease, the solution was not to change the agricultural practices that had bred this disaster but to find another kind of banana to cultivate in the same way. Forty years after the Gros Michel disappeared, the Cavendish is now facing extinction as two diseases pursue it around the globe.

In growing only a single variety and not rotating it with other kinds of crops, United Fruit has been practicing monoculture, the

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- Ralph Waldo Emerson

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bedeviling phenomenon that makes agriculture cheap and fast but makes farmers and agribusinesses far more susceptible to pestilence, disease and major crop failure. Michael Pollan has produced an impressive body of work documenting the folly of this system, noting as an example the terrible potato famine in 1845, which wiped out one in eight Irishmen in three years as a result of the country's unfortunate reliance on a single variety of a single crop: the Lumper potato. A fungus afflicting the Lumper quickly and uninterruptedly spread from one potato to the next, until all were rendered inedible, leaving nothing for the Irish to eat. As an early, persistent and continued practitioner of this system, United Fruit doomed its bananas, the land, its workers and ultimately its bottom line.

Koeppel's book, a hybrid of scientific adventure, mystery and biography, tracks this unraveling and the attempt to remedy it, which he calls the search "for the ultimate solution to a crime in progress." His is a tale of a threatened species and the scientific heroes hunting to save the fruit. There's more of a driving force and an urgency in his book, and it feels less stale than Chapman's—whose story, for some unexplained reason, trails off after the 1970s, virtually ignoring the wrongdoing of current-day Chiquita, most notably recent disclosures by the Justice Department that between 1997 and 2004, Chiquita paid more than $1.7 million to the right-wing Colombian terrorist group Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia, or AUC) for "security." The company was fined $25 million. While it's possible that Chapman's book went to press before the public announcement of this development in March 2007, recent history of the corporation gets thin treatment in the book; also ignored is its battle with the *Cincinnati Enquirer* over a lengthy investigative article that appeared in the paper in 1998. Because some of the information in the report was gained illegally by an *Enquirer* reporter, the paper eventually disavowed the story and paid Chiquita somewhere in the area of $14 million in damages. The settlement included stipulations that prevented the paper from writing about Chiquita in the future. Most interesting, the allegations in the story—which included tales of labor exploitation, environmental degradation and foreign government interference—were never adequately disputed.

Koeppel's writing style isn't as alluring as the arc of his story, and his sense of irony could be keener. Koeppel informs us, for example, that after retiring in 1951, United Fruit mogul Sam Zemurray "provided cash to support *The Nation*, the weekly liberal newsmagazine." Recall that this is the same Zemurray who had a hand in the 1910 coup in Honduras. An interesting side note that Koeppel doesn't mention: Zemurray, the so-called Banana Man, wrote to this magazine in 1950 to dispute a prior report on the United Fruit Company that had described it as an "obstacle of progress in Central America."

Today, banana moguls are running out of land to slash and burn, and breeds of bananas that will resist illness. If the Cavendish is going extinct, what will replace it? It turns out there's no easy answer.

"A banana's taste and visual appearance are as predictable as a Big Mac's," Koeppel writes. Smooth, bright, seedless, conveniently wrapped; the banana is the original fast food—thanks in no small part to the marketing effort by United Fruit. But by supplying us with only one kind of banana all of these years and doing everything in its power to incorporate it into our daily diet and consciousness, the company put itself in a kind of pickle. How can consumers accept any other kind of banana as a banana? As it turns out, scientists in Honduras have bred a banana that can withstand Panama disease and Sigatoka. But the supposed problem with the Goldfinger, as the breed is known, is not its hardiness but its inability to conform to our preconceived notion of a banana. It doesn't look like what we expect; Koeppel calls it "rotund" and claims it doesn't rot. But more significant, it apparently doesn't have the familiar banana taste—though as much a banana as any other, it is very different from the Cavendish. Many people call it the "acid banana" or "apple banana," and it's described as "tart" and "less creamy." In taste tests, consumers pick the Cavendish over the Goldfinger, and according to Koeppel it "tastes so different than what we're now accustomed to that the transition could be more jarring than the Gros Michel changeover." In other words, United Fruit was so successful at convincing us that its banana was the only kind of banana that companies are reluctant to sell anything else, even in the face of extinction and lost profits.

Koeppel sees the answer to our banana woes in genetic engineering. As farfetched as it may sound, scientists are currently working to map the banana genome, and experiments are under way to modify bananas genetically to carry the hepatitis B vaccine and contain extra quantities of vitamin A from fish. According to Koeppel, genetic manipulation is the best hope for a hardier, disease-resistant banana. "Genetic transformation…

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is revolution, not evolution," he quotes a leading banana scientist as saying.

Is this the kind of food revolution we really want? After all, the story of the modern banana—and, in fact, modern agriculture—has been about man attempting to tame nature through technological and business innovation. But nature has always rebelled. To sell more bananas and to determine the idea of the banana, the businessmen grew and sold just one kind. But that leaves the crop especially vulnerable to pathogens, so when disease threatened, the company doused the plants with pesticides. When those no longer worked, they abandoned the land ravaged by monoculture and chemicals and moved elsewhere. Now on the run, the banana men are turning to the lab for a genetically modified miracle. Yes, it's very possible that genetically manipulated bananas are safe to eat and won't create science fiction–inspired disaster. The jury's still out on the health consequences. But technological innovation has never been the panacea it's advertised to be; unintended consequences and vulnerabilities to nature have always emerged. Why does Koeppel think things will be different this time?

While small-scale organic farming all over the world is going a long way toward countering large-scale monoculture practiced by agribusinesses everywhere, I'm not sure the world can rely on those good methods for our supply of bananas. It's a crucial fruit, especially for people in poorer countries. Ugandans, to take an example, eat more than 500 pounds of bananas per person per year, and so whatever the solution is, it has to be big, and replicated many times over. Large-scale farming too often goes hand in hand with monoculture, and though there may be a way to integrate crop rotation and biodiversity into our banana plantations, I don't know if that's realistic—especially right away.

But one solution can come in the form of altering our idea of the banana—the very idea that was so firmly shaped by the banana moguls themselves. The banana is not a Big Mac, and its taste and visual appearance should not be as predictable as one. It's a fruit from nature, not a complicated cocktail of additives and preservatives, and we should come to expect from it that which we associate with nature: variety and imperfection. With that comes unpredictability, but also pleasure. Repurposing our expectation of the banana in this way will make room in our grocery stores for funny-looking, strange-tasting bananas like the Goldfinger. Our expectations broadened, maybe we won't need to rely on the mechanized salvation promised by genetic scientists. ■

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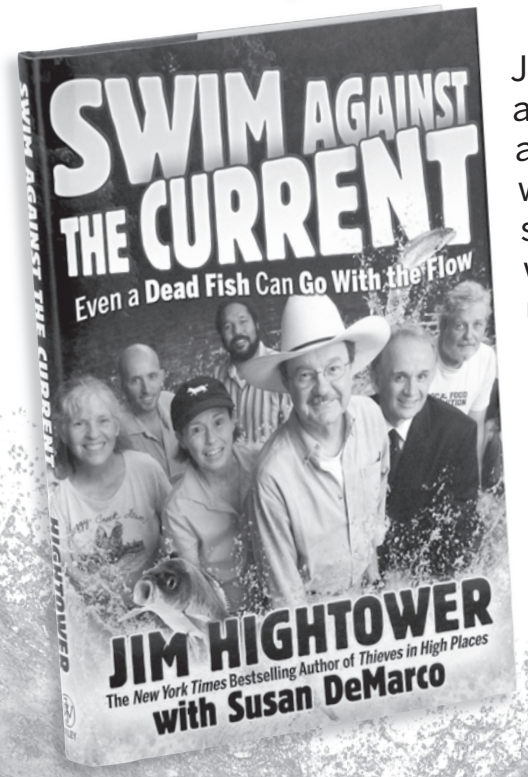
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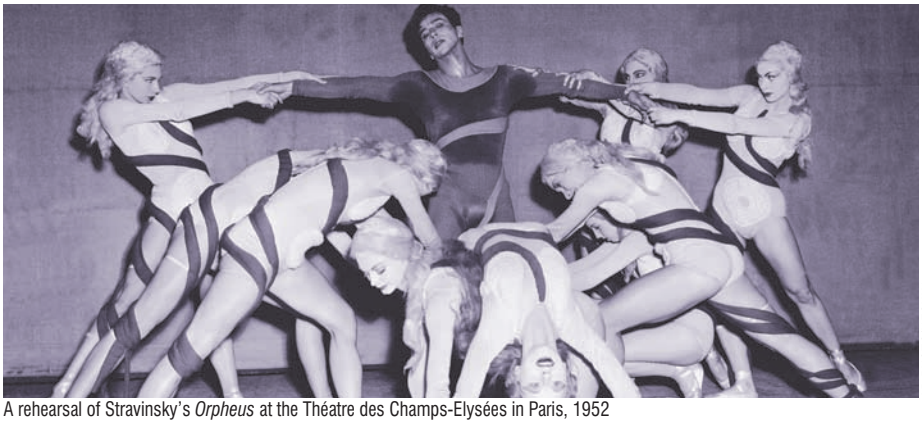

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A rehearsal of Stravinsky's *Orpheus* at the Théatre des Champs-Elysées in Paris, 1952

The Stravinsky Shuffle

by DAVID SCHIFF

The recent reissue of the twenty-two-CD Igor Stravinsky box set (Sony Classical, $35)—a collection of some twenty-five hours of music conducted mostly by Stravinsky, originally titled *The Edition* and now called *Works*—is at once an irresistible bargain and an anachronism, a reminder of how radically music packaging and listening habits have changed since Stravinsky died in 1971 at 88. Like air travel today, the new Stravinsky box is stripped down to economy: gone are the pictures, program notes and libretti of the original; the liner booklet is minimal and its type minuscule. The original CD box, released in 1991, was itself a downsizing of the 1986 repackaging of original LP releases from the 1950s and '60s. The vinyl sounded better than any CDs (even though Columbia Records, now Sony, was never celebrated for its engineering), and the jackets teemed with notes printed in readable type. When these recordings first appeared, perhaps even in their first CD incarnation, a listener would have lounged comfortably in front of a hi-fi. Now music is a movable feast. We listen on iPods or iTunes. It would be helpful (and considerate) if Sony put all the original liner notes on a website, but for a listener on the treadmill a libretto is useless and sound quality less important than the quantity of noise that headphones can suppress. Yet I think the gym could be the perfect place to get reacquainted with the joys of Stravinsky's music. Just download the whole box and listen in shuffle mode. Almost every track will set your feet moving.

Randomized listening can expose the banality of one's musical tastes. Left to our own willfulness, we listen to the same old pieces in the same old way, seeking out the "good" and skipping the "bad." Or we avoid the "early works" in favor of the "late"—though in Stravinsky's case most people would choose the opposite. Yet with Stravinsky that turns out to be the wrong choice, since there are unexpected pleasures throughout his career. If you're lucky, the shuffle will surprise you with the first act of the opera *The Nightingale*, as fresh-sounding as when it was written a century ago, its precociously mastered orchestral colors and catchy tunes still vibrant, or with *Pribaoutki*, folk songs that seem to rise from the soil (with an earth-mother performance by Cathy Berberian). Perhaps you'll have a chance encounter with the lyric elegance of "Eglogue II" from *Duo Concertant* (in a historical performance with Stravinsky and Joseph Szigeti), or the almost Coplandesque variations from the *Sonata for Two Pianos*, or the plaintive iterations of "adjuva" (help Thou my disbelief) from the choral-orchestral piece *Canticum Sacrum*, in which Stravinsky, heeding Yeats, set sail for Byzantium. Or you may collide with the two failures in the box, both, most unfortunately, works of the greatest importance: *Les Noces*, sung in English when only Russian will do, and an *Oedipus Rex* that hits new highs and lows in out-of-tune singing.

Serendipity has its limits. Sometimes the shuffle slices and dices a piece cruelly. I have a Leonard Bernstein recording of Mahler's Ninth on my iPod that is divided into tracks rarely more than two minutes long, often shorter. These Mahler molecules burst open from time to time in no particular order and in unfriendly successions—say, after a track from *Miles Ahead* (the classic Miles Davis/Gil Evans album). In the shuffle they act as teas-

David Schiff, a professor of music at Reed College, is the composer of the opera Gimpel the Fool *and the author of books on the music of Elliott Carter and George Gershwin.*

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ers, reminding me that I have neglected the symphony of symphonies for too long. For Mahler you need to get off the treadmill and put your life on hold.

Stravinsky's music, by contrast, was composed in short takes. The ballet *Agon* is composed of many short movements, each about a minute long and coherent and complete in itself. I could happily savor the seventy-two-second "dueling banjos" mandolin-harp duet of the "Gaillarde" (a movement from *Agon*)—with its twanging rhythmic interplay framed by floating harmonics in the flutes and double basses—replayed on its own for hours on end. Moreover, unlike Mahler's music, with its constant swings between the extremes of the dynamic range, much of Stravinsky's music is composed in his trademark mezzo-forte (shared with Miles Davis); Stravinsky's "cool" sound, reinforced by Columbia's bone-dry acoustics, frees you from the tiresome business of adjusting the volume.

More important, shuffling Stravinsky liberates his music from chronology, which is often confused with progression and development. Stravinsky's music challenges lazy notions of tradition, history, time itself—not a constant flow but a concatenation of asymmetric bumps, grinds and lurches, full stops. Critics have cast his music into the three-period model forged for Beethoven, with Stravinsky's early, middle and late being Russian, French and American. Hostile critics have bemoaned a progressive decline: the brilliant young Russian of the early ballets, the rootless cosmopolitan living in Paris in the years between the world wars, the old man in Los Angeles pandering to the serialist fashions of a younger generation.

Yet shuffling reveals that these "periods" were all connected, not discrete but simultaneous. Stravinsky would echo the Russian folk chant of *Les Noces* in the esoteric twelve-tone counterpoint of *Threni*, and he invoked the neoclassical opening of his *Capriccio for Piano and Orchestra* in his Webernesque *Movements for Piano and Orchestra*, written thirty years later. Stravinsky applied the same principles of time travel to the wider musical past, moving not just forward (like Webern) or backward (like late Strauss) but in any way he pleased. In the ballet *Agon* we hear the French Renaissance, the Elizabethan consort, quotes from Schoenberg and Webern, echoes of bebop, a reminder of *The Rite of Spring*. In *Agon*'s opening fanfare, poet and dance critic Edwin Denby even detected snatches of the opening notes of Tommy Dorsey's "Chinatown, My Chinatown," "misremembered on an electric mandolin."

The music in this museum-in-a-box provides so much pleasure that it raises, once again, the question of Stravinsky's underwhelming place in the concert repertory. To this day, most orchestras feel obliged to play only four pieces: *The Firebird*, *Petruchka*, *The Rite of Spring* and *Symphony of Psalms*; of the four concertos, only the Violin Concerto in D, which is slowly claiming a place in the repertory alongside the contemporary concertos of Prokofiev, Bartók, Barber and Berg, is performed with any regularity. Balletomanes, on the other hand, can hear almost all of Stravinsky all the time; yet it is striking that his great trilogy of Greek ballets (*Apollo*, *Orpheus*, *Agon*) has not achieved the concert-hall status of Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet*. I think resistance to the later music has two sources: the nature of the music itself and a style of interpretation still inhibited by the composer's performances as enshrined in this box set. As a glance at his catalog reveals, Stravinsky was much more a composer for the theater than for the concert hall, and for him, unlike Wagner, the theater always involved collaboration. When Stravinsky was brought in to compose music for *The Firebird*, plans for the ballet were well under way. He learned to be a team player, and over the years, es-

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■ A Gathering of the Tribes has announced Deconstructing Time: Memories, an exhibition of totems sculpted from remnants of childhood memories and glass by Acquaetta Williams, opening at Tribes Gallery in New York on March 3. There will be an artist reception at Tribes on Saturday, March 8, from 6 to 9 PM. *A Gathering of the Tribes* magazine available now through the gallery and its website. A Gathering of the Tribes, 285 East 3rd Street, New York, NY 10009. (212) 674-3778. Fax: (212) 674-5576. www.tribes.org, info@tribes.org. Sun–Sat: 12–6 PM or by appointment.

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pecially in his work with Balanchine, he thought of his music as a complement to the visual component, half of a complete work of art.

After *The Rite of Spring*, with its two impressionistic preludes, Stravinsky abandoned the mood-and-atmosphere business, leaving it to the choreographers. Devoid of dance, *Apollo* can sound like a pastiche of scores by Ludwig Minkus and Léo Delibes; with movement it becomes a soaring hymn to beauty. Nothing in the pas de deux from *Agon* sounds particularly erotic; Balanchine made it hot and sweaty. Sometimes Stravinsky even seems to write against the danced story: the Furies surround Orpheus, bind his eyes and return Eurydice to him to a breezy boogie-woogie.

Perhaps these works will come to life in the concert hall only for listeners with ears as acute as Balanchine's, or when conducted with a similarly attuned maestro. Most composers seek out conductors to champion their music. Stravinsky, however, relied on conducting gigs for a good part of his income. In his writings he rebuked rival conductors, and he boasted of signing the gluteus maximus of an ersatz Greek statue in the Villa D'este Wilhelm von der Furtwangler—revenge for an unhappy collaboration on the 1924 Piano Concerto with the great German maestro, whose famous command of rubato in Buckner or Wagner would have been antithetical to Stravinsky's precise and unvarying tempo.

Stravinsky dismissed the notion of interpretation. The conductor's job was to set the right tempo and not get in the way of the music. This is an apt description of a ballet conductor's task, but the concert hall has a different dynamic; cynics might say that Stravinsky reduced the interpretive role of the conductor to match his own limited technique: head in the score, arms flailing wildly. It's unfortunate that Stravinsky, for whatever reasons, discouraged the growth of a diverse interpretive community for his music; the appearance of his "definitive" Columbia recordings, many of them made hastily with pickup orchestras, and his vigilance in correcting the misdeeds of competitors may have scared off some worthy rival efforts. Neither Bernstein nor Reiner recorded the Greek trilogy, though they put their distinctive stamps on *The Rite of Spring* and *The Song of the Nightingale*, respectively. To my ear, the notion that Stravinsky's music is simply a matter of tempo and objectivity reached a dead end in the much-praised performances by Pierre Boulez, in which a concern for lucidity over every other quality drains the music of its earthy vitality.

Recordings of *The Rite of Spring* by Valery Gergiev and Daniel Barenboim (the Furtwängler disciple, of all people) reveal that neither Stravinsky nor Boulez had exhausted this subject. Gergiev pricks up your ears with the first note: the famous opening bassoon solo, played *molto espressivo*, becomes a human voice, not an instrumental effect. Gergiev represents the cutting edge for the post-Soviet reclamation of Stravinsky's music by Russian performers. Russians have always heard all of Stravinsky's work as Russian music. Whereas some critics thought Stravinsky's 1924 Piano Concerto was reaching back to Bach, Prokofiev detected quotes from Tchaikovsky. Significantly, Gergiev's recording pairs *The Rite of Spring* with Scriabin's symphony *Poem of Ecstasy*, reminding us of their common roots in theosophical mysticism. (Stravinsky expunged the many traces of Scriabin when he reduced the score of *Firebird* to an orchestral suite. "I could never love a bar of his bombastic music," he wrote.) Russians hear Stravinsky's neoclassicism as a move from St. Petersburg to Moscow, a turn away from Rimsky-Korsakov to the Tchaikovsky of the Rococco Variations and the *Serenade for Strings*; for them the music remains both Russian and Romantic. Russians may even reclaim the later, serial music.

During a recent troll of the bargain bins, I fished out an unexpected recording of three works by Sviatoslav Richter I had assumed were beyond the pale for Soviet musicians: Hindemith's Kammermusik No. 2, Bartók's Second Piano Concerto and Stravinsky's 1959 *Movements for Piano and Orchestra*, usually considered his most arcane creation. This CD perfectly illustrates how interpretation, not literal "execution," keeps music alive. Richter takes the fourth movement of Stravinsky's angular, sputtering piece much slower than Stravinsky does, expanding the dimensions of the music and thereby connecting its sustained string harmonics to the nocturnal mysteries that open the second part of *The Rite of Spring*. (Those in the San Francisco Bay Area interested in hearing this "new" Russian Stravinsky might check out the three-day Stravinsky festival at Stanford University that will begin March 7, featuring pianist Alexander Toradze.) Valery Gergiev is a very busy man, lately having occupied himself with Prokofiev's mammoth *War and Peace*, but I hope he can find the time to record a box set to rival Stravinsky's. Then I will download both to my iPod, mount the treadmill, select shuffle and play guess the conductor. ■

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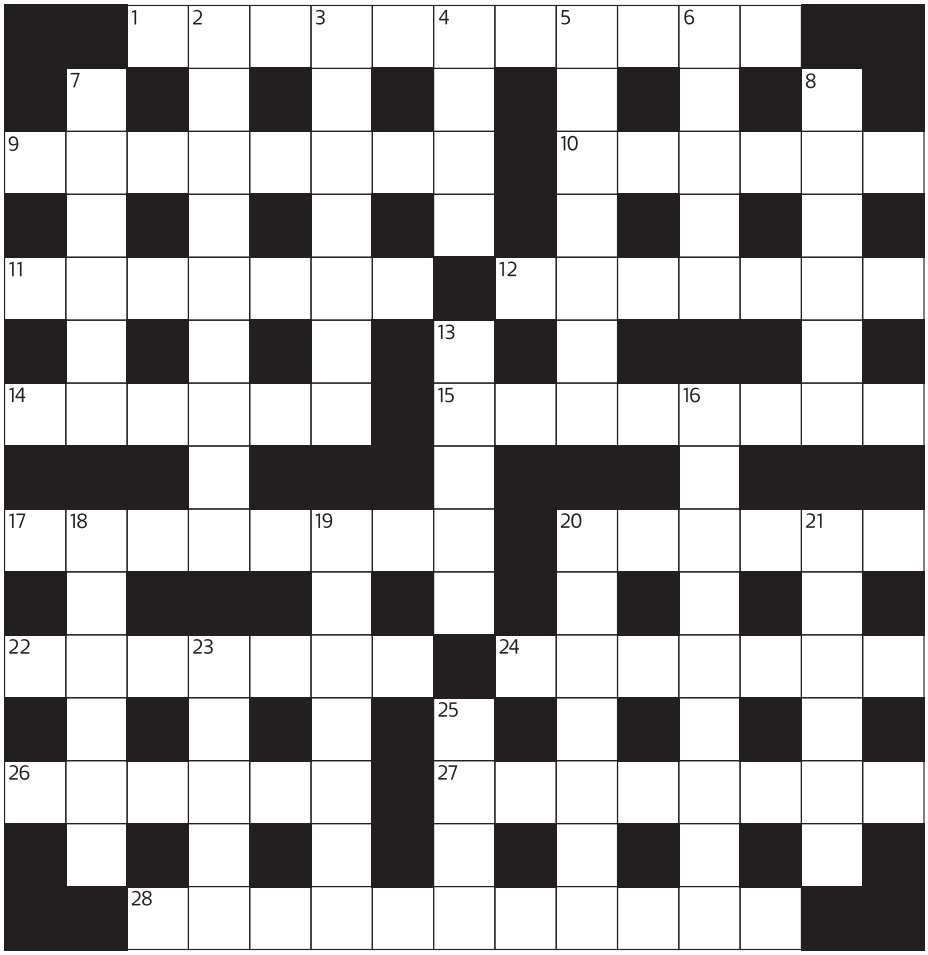

ACROSS

1 Make an inventory, but don't finish telling to whom the rustled cattle belonged. (4,5,2)

9 A very old city in the money, but they were only part human. (8)

10 Papal representative, with sister hanging on to a lot of union types. (6)

11 Accepted as top-notch in a tree, being rather well-liked by everybody. (7)

12 Stories of feet, toes, ankles, etc. (7)

14 Take little notice with such as sin, being the good stuff I am telling you. (6)

15 The broken sex meter shows what conventional types don't go to. (8)

17 The locale of Evangeline, having thousand per, possibly. (5,3)

20 Men's men, making travels right out of it. (6)

22 Gone completely mad, like an old Norse warrior. (7)

24 In Alaska, pass near it, with a sort of wag in the heavens. (7)

26 Where you might find a couple of literary gentlemen bending over an example of it. (6)

27 Proving a genius is only entitled to one glass! (8)

28 Little notice given to a form of green, and I make a little song concerning something that supposedly pays. (11)

DOWN

2 Certain legendary tales are a special skill with a noted chariot driver and a Scotsman. (9)

3 An old bird—dead—but you have to follow in its footsteps. (7)

4 Possibly sots do this and turn, when wanting a good night's sleep. (4)

5 Happy with the amount contained? (7)

6 Perhaps a wild creature, but not very heavy! (5)

7 and **8** Show-offs may say they don't like to play it, but it takes a very short time to fool around with it. (6,6)

13 and **25** Stop a common man from being so useful on washday? (9)

16 When light enough, you'll see how to impart knowledge here. (9)

18 Possibly did a dance, but acted a bit tipsy. (6)

19 Showing how many years the wine has, you get over the dangerous waters this way. (7)

20 A half a dozen rulers might be needed to measure their possibly early stay on this side. (7)

21 Melpomene was such a muse, and waved a bit of cloth in shaky circumstances. (6)

23 Takes second place to the writer, in mightiness. (5)

25 See 13

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